

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING VALUES OF GUESTS' LODGING EXPERIENCE
AT LUXURY HOTELS – EFFECTS OF THEME AND SERVICE QUALITY

A Dissertation

by

SEOBYU SONG

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Chair of Committee,	Gary Ellis
Committee Members,	Jinmoo Heo
	Gerard Kyle
	Courtney Suess-Raeisinafchi
Head of Department,	Scott Shafer

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ABSTRACT

A proposed model of guest lodging experience value was tested. The model included four dimensions of guest lodging experience value: monetary, time, emotional, and escape. Lodging experience value was proposed to result from encounters with service quality satisfiers and dissatisfiers, and with an unanticipated value-added feature (a theme). Two potential long-term impacts, intention to recommend the lodging experience to others and the memorability of the lodging experience, were proposed to increase as guest lodging experience value increases. To test the model, 453 panel participants were randomly assigned to view videos depicting each of six imaginary lodging experience scenarios, corresponding to a 2 x 3 experimental design. Theme, representing an unanticipated value-added feature, was either present or absent in each video, and service quality (satisfiers and dissatisfiers) was either excellent, moderate, or poor. Participants completed self-report measures of the values of lodging experience and potential long-term impacts after viewing their assigned scenario. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed an interaction effect of theming and service quality on value of lodging experience. Canonical correlation analysis results supported the hypothesis that lodging experience values positively influence potential long-term impacts.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

I.1 Introduction and Rationale

Success in the highly competitive lodging industry depends, in part, on the ability of providers to reliably deliver service encounters that yield valued lodging experiences. Among the valued experiences that various authors have asserted to be important to lodging service guests are positive emotions (Ellis, Freeman, Jamal, & Jiang, 2019a; Petrick, 2002), perceptions of monetary value (Bagdare, 2013; Grewal, Levy, & Kumar, 2009), perceptions of value of time spent at the hotel (Ellis et al., 2019b), and escape value (Hosany & Witham, 2010; Mody, Suess, & Lehto, 2017; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). Providing experiences that maximize these values may produce long-term benefits for both the hotel and the visitor. Valued experiences may increase guests' inclinations to recommend (Reichheld, 2003), and may also result in favorable long-term memories (Mody et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2007; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

Research on experience design indicates three sets of lodging service design features that may impact the value with which guests regard their lodging experiences: satisfiers, dissatisfiers, and delighters (Figure 1; Beheshtinia & Farzaneh, 2019; Kano, Seraku, Takahashi, & Tsuji, 1984; Kuo, Chen, & Boger, 2016; Lai, Hitchcock, Yang, & Lu, 2018). Satisfiers are “one dimensional” (Chiang, Chen, & Hsu, 2019; Kano et al., 1984) features. When provided at expected levels, customers report satisfaction; they value the product or service. At levels below expectations, customers report dissatisfaction. As examples of one-dimensional features, guests ordinarily expect beds

to be comfortable, hot water to be available, and they increasingly expect free internet access. Dissatisfiers, in contrast, are “must be” features of the product or service. If dissatisfiers are not accounted for, customers report dissatisfaction, but if they are accounted for satisfaction does not increase. Luxury hotel guests, for example, expect to be treated with courtesy, and they expect the hotels to be clean and free of unpleasant noises and aromas. Delighters are also known as attractive features of the offering (Chiang et al., 2019; Kano et al., 1984). Their presence yields delight and perceptions of higher value, but their absence does not diminish delight and value. Examples of delighters include an unanticipated theme, unanticipated room upgrades, and unanticipated snacks such warm cookies, coffee, or tea provided at check-in. Although Kano’s distinction between satisfiers, delighters, and dissatisfiers has been conceptually applied to travel and leisure services and experiences (e.g., Beheshtinia & Farzaneh, 2019; Ellis & Rossman, 2008; Kano, 1984; Kuo et al., 2016; Lai et al., 2018), no previous study has integrated these elements into a single model of lodging experience value, nor have the empirical relations among this set of presumed causes and effects of value been tested. The purpose of this study, then, was to examine the effect of customer service quality (satisfiers and dissatisfiers) and unanticipated theme (delighter) on lodging experience values and potential long-term impacts.

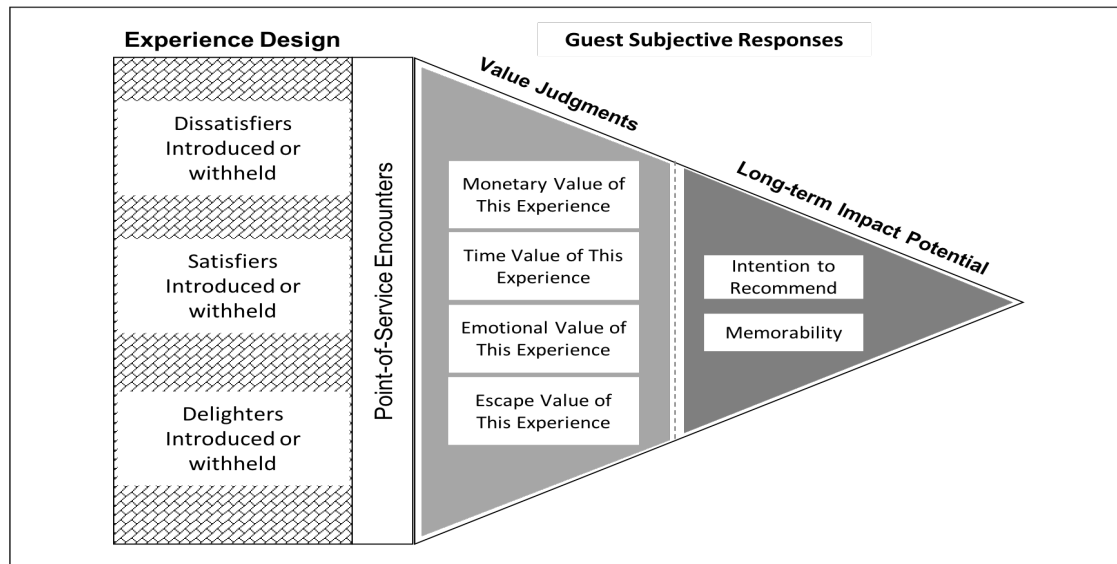


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Prevailing assumptions about the value of lodging experiences center on service quality (e.g., Knutson et al., 1991, LODGSERV; Getty & Thompson, 1995, LODGQUAL, Mei, Dean, & White, 1999, HOLSERV). Service quality actions function as satisfiers and dissatisfiers. A guest may expect a reasonably comfortable bed, a room free of unpleasant aromas, hot water from for hygiene purposes, and correct billing for room charges. All of these examples fit within the “tangibles” dimension of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988, SERVQUAL; Knutson et al., 1991, LODGSERV; Getty & Thompson, 1995, LODGQUAL, Mei et al., 1999, HOLSERV) and each can be classified as a dissatisfier or a satisfier. Yet, providing excellent service quality may not be enough to lead to high lodging experience values. Delighters are also important parts of the guest experience context. Managers of luxury hotels also need to include delighters to differentiate their offerings and to provide highly valued lodging

experiences for their guests. In the context of lodging, delighters may include strategies as theming, personalized interactions, multisensory appeal, and unanticipated, value-added take-aways (Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Ellis & Rossman, 2008).

Effects of guest service quality and experience economy strategies have been studied in the context of “structured experiences” (Duerden, Ward, & Freeman, 2015). Structured experiences are instances of participation in a pleasing or meaningful activity, such as a specific dining experience, a bout of exercise, or watching an artistic performance or sport competition. Theory and research indicate an interaction effect (Ellis, Lacanienta, Freeman, & Hill, 2019c; Ellis et al., 2019a): experience industry strategies such as theming are presumed to increase positive subjective states among participants only when a threshold of service quality is met or exceeded. If service quality is poor, attempts to implement experience industry strategies may diminish the quality of subjective experiences.

This interaction effect hypothesis was supported in a study of short-term “structured experiences” (Ellis et al., 2019c). In that study, researchers evaluated service quality and visitor subjective experiences at several Hawaiian tourism attractions. Hotel stays, though, differ in very substantial ways from individual structured experiences. Hotel stays include hours of consciousness interspersed with hours of sleep, and they typically involve a wide array of structured experiences. On a given day, a hotel guest may dine at a hotel restaurant, explore goods in the gift shop, socialize in a lounge, exercise, work in a hotel business center, and watch an in-room movie. Little is thus known about the independent or joint effects of service quality and experience economy

techniques on lodging experiences (Mody, Suess, & Lehto, 2019), and other inquiry suggests that theming may directly affect values of lodging experiences (Åstrøm, 2019). Thus, the interaction effect of theme by service quality is of interest in this study, in addition to the main effects. A review of literature on lodging experience value, theming service quality, and potential long-term impacts of lodging experience follows.

I.2 Literature Review

Following is a review, critique, and integration of the bodies of literature that inform procedures for this study. The literature review is divided into four major sections. Subjective lodging experience is defined in the first section, and the history of study of the concept is reviewed. Approaches to conceptualizing and measuring values of the lodging experiences and potential long-term impacts are also described and critiqued. The second section describes the reason theme is regarded as an important factor in the context of luxury hotel industry. The third section is a summary of literature on the tourism and experience industry strategy of theming point-of-service encounters with guests (e.g., Åstrøm, 2019). Theming is defined, its history is reviewed, and functions and effects of theming are explored. The fourth section summarizes literature on service quality. After reviewing theoretical and empirical concepts, experiment design is addressed. Then, the literature review concludes with a statement of hypotheses to be tested.

1.2.1 Subjective Lodging Experience

“If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.” – Peter Drucker

Providing positive customer experience can turn customers into advocates, upon which long-term competitive advantage and profitability can be achieved (Smith & Weeler, 2002). After the concept of “experience economy” was proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 2011), many studies in hospitality and tourism have attempted to advance understanding the concept, experience (Ren, Qiu, Wang, & Lin, 2016). Hospitality and tourism industries are experience-intensive; customer experience is acknowledged as a key factor affecting customer behaviors positively (Cetin & Walls, 2016). Most managers agree that experiences are important phenomena for differentiating products and for the long-term success of organizations (Shaw & Ivens, 2002). Increasing attention is being paid by marketing professionals to design and delivery of customer experiences to achieving differentiation in the hospitality market (Yuan & Wu, 2008). Despite the important role of customer experiences, little is known about the determinants and consequences of customer experiences (Ali & Omar, 2014; Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011). This section provides a summary of current definitions, constructions, and measurements of customer experiences.

1.2.1.1 Definition and history

Providing positive experiences for customers is a significant driver of commercial success and competitive advantage (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Definitions of customer experience vary depending on the situations and grounds for experience

(Ren et al., 2016). Three terminologies (i.e., customer experience, service experience, and customer service experience) are commonly used in customer experience research (Bueno, Weber, Bomfim, & Kato, 2019). Bueno et al. (2019) argued that the primary difference between the terms, “customer experience” and “service experience” is what the subjects of the experiences are. While the customer experience deals with customers mainly as the experience actors, the service experience addresses any actors including customers (Jaakkola et al., 2017). Furthermore, while customer experience is explained as an internal and subjective customer response (Dagger & Sweeney, 2007; Meyer & Schwager, 2007), service experience embraces service employees and social experience networks (Bueno et al., 2019; Heinonen & Strandvik, 2009). However, the concepts of customer experience and service experience are complementary (Bueno et al., 2019) and these two concepts have frequently used as an interchangeable terminology. For defining the term of lodging experience concretely, it is essential to understand what the concept of experience.

As aforementioned, many researchers employed the term of customer experience or service experience to define or explain what experience is in a specific context such as marketing, hospitality, and tourism. Meyer and Schwager (2007) defined customer experience as “the internal and subjective response customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company” (p. 118). Similarly, Shaw (2005) explained “customer experience is an interaction between an organization and a customer. It is a blend of an organization’s physical performance, the senses stimulated, and emotions evoked, each intuitively measured against customer expectations across all moments of contact” (p.

51). Lemon and Verheof (2016) stated that customer experience is the result of interaction between the customer and elements of the organizations (e.g., products, services, or employees). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) defined customer experience as a subjective state of consciousness with a variety of symbolic meanings, hedonic responses, and aesthetic criteria that are influenced by environmental inputs, consumer inputs, intervening responses, and output consequences. Gentile et al. (2007) explained that customer experience originates from a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organization, which provoke a reaction.

A variety of definitions of experience have been advanced, and there is no universally accepted definition of customer/service experience in the hospitality and tourism arena. For example, Walls et al. (2011) have reviewed the definitions of experience and the contextual nature of consumer experiences. Walls et al. (2011) have summarized a variety of definitions of experience (see Table 1) and asserted that definitions of consumer experience are diverse resulting in the difficulty in understanding the concept of experience. Furthermore, some definitions of experience are seemingly circular (Palmer, 2010). As a result, there is a growing consensus that a universally accepted definition of experience is needed. That approach should integrate diverse perspectives (Ali, Kim, Li, & Jeon, 2018; Klaus & Maklan, 2012).

As there is no clear definition of experience, it is necessary to define the term of experience that will be used in this study. Based on the body of literature on customer or service experience, it could be understood that experience is a subjective response and the result of interaction between the customer and elements of the organizations

including products, services, employees and other customers. Previous research asserts that guest experience is a subjective response, including functional, rational, affective, and emotional dimensions (Bueno et al., 2019). Therefore, in the lodging industry context, it is reasonable to define guest lodging experience using these components. Guest lodging experience, then, can be defined as “a state of motivation (*genus proximum*) that results from encounters with a lodging service or lodging service provider (*differentia specifica*).” As a state of motivation, guest lodging experiences have cognitive, affective, and agentic elements. Cognitively, a guest may judge encounters to be high quality and valued. Pleasing affect, including a sense of delight (an extreme form of satisfaction; Oliver, 2010) is part of the experience, and guests will feel inclinations toward advocacy for the service, if others inquire. Visitors who have had a quality lodging experience, then, value their experience, believe the price they paid was fair (Xia, Monroe, & Cox, 2004), have positive emotions about their stay (e.g., Petrick, 2002), and they stand ready to engage in communications that would serve to encourage other people to stay at the facility (Ellis et al., 2019a; Ellis et al., 2019c; Kim, Ritchie, & Tung, 2010; Oliver, 2010; Pourabedin & Migin, 2015; Reichheld, 2003; Torres & Kline, 2013; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2014). In contrast, negative guest lodging experiences result in disgust (an extreme form of dissatisfaction; Ralston, Ellis, Compton, & Lee, 2007), a perception that time was not well spent, a perception of price unfairness, and negative word-of-mouth advertising.

Table 1. Summary of experience definitions

Author (year)	Definition
Ray (2008)	Experiences interrupt people from their lives and expectations to provide something of interest that demands attention; experiences themselves are incredibly involving
Lashley (2008)	Discusses tourism experiences from the perspective of creating hospitable relationships between the host and guest; these experiences engage emotions, which is essential to creating a memory
Titz (2007)	No single model of experiential consumption has emerged; experiential consumption is central to a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism context
Mossberg (2007)	A blend of many elements coming together and involve the consumer emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually
Oh et al. (2007)	From a consumer perspective, experiences are “enjoyable, engaging, memorable encounters for those consuming these events”
Andersson (2007)	The tourist experience is proposed at the moment when tourism consumption and tourism production meet
Uriely (2005)	The tourist experience is currently depicted as an obscure and diverse phenomenon, which is mostly constituted by the individual consumer
Berry et al. (2002)	The means of orchestrating all the clues that people detect in the buying process
Lewis & Chambers (2000)	The total outcome to the customer from the combination of environment, goods, and services purchased
McLellan (2000)	The goal of experience design is to orchestrate experiences that functional, purposeful, engaging, compelling, and memorable
Gupta & Vajic (2000) – Palmer (2010)	An experience occurs when a customer has any sensation or knowledge acquisition resulting from some level of interaction with different elements of a context created by the service provider
Schmitt (1999)	Experiences are private events that are not self-generated but rather occur in response to some staged situation and involve the entire being Experiences provide sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and relational values that replace functional values (Palmer, 2010)
Pine & Gilmore (1998)	A distinct economic offering that are as different from services as services are from goods; successful experiences are those that the customer finds unique, memorable and sustainable over time, would want to repeat and build upon, and enthusiastically promotes via word of mouth
O’Sullivan & Spangler (1998)	Involves the participation and involvement of the individual in the consumption and the state of being physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, or spiritually engaged found that experience
Carlson (1997)	An experience can be defined as a constant flow of thoughts and feelings that occur during moments of consciousness
Merriam-Webster (1993)	The fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through a direct observation or participation
Arnould & Price (1993)	Extraordinary experiences are those characterized by high levels of emotional intensity
Denzin (1992)	Extraordinary experiences rupture routines and live and provoke radical redefinitions of the self; In moments of epiphany, people redefine themselves. Epiphanies are connected to turning-point experiences

Table 1 Continued

Author (year)	Definition
Csikszentmihalyi (1990)	Flow is the optimal experience that keeps one motivated. This feeling often involves painful, risky or difficult efforts that stretch the person's capacity as well as an element of novelty and discovery. Flow is an almost effortless yet highly focused state of consciousness and yet the descriptions do not vary much by culture, gender, or age
Mannell (1984)	An experience or state of mind, is uniquely individual and that the quality rather than the quantity of leisure in our lives deserves attention
Hirschman & Holbrook (1982)	Those facets of consumer behavior that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one's experience with products
Maslow (1964)	Peak experience is the experiences in which the individual transcends ordinary reality and perceives being or ultimate reality. Short in duration and accompanied by positive affect
Thorne (1963)	Peak experience is subjectively recognized to be one of the high points of life, one of the most exciting, rich and fulfilling experiences which the person has ever had. An experience may be described operationally as a subjective experiencing of what is subjectively recognized to be one of the lowest points of life, one of the worst, most unpleasant and harrowing experiences of life
Dewey (1963) – Palmer (2010)	Experience involves progression over time, anticipation, emotional involvement, and a uniqueness that makes an activity stand out from the ordinary
Abbott (1955) (cited by Holbrook, 2006, p. 40) – Palmer (2010)	What people really desire is not products, but satisfying experiences. Experiences are attained through activities. In order that activities may be carried out, physical objects for the services of human beings are usually needed. Here lies the connecting link between men's inner world and the outer world of economic activity. People want products because they want the experience which they hope the products will render.
Resources derived from "Walls, A. R., Okumus, F., Wang, Y. R., & Kwun, D. J. W. (2011). An epistemological view of consumer experiences. <i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i> , 30(1), 10-21."	

I.2.1.2 Measuring lodging experience

Although many researchers have attempted to measure the customer experience or service experience, they regarded the determinants of experience quality as a tool to measure the experience quality. For example, Cetin and Dincer (2013) investigated guest experience quality in the hotel context. They utilized the physical environment and social interactions as two dimensions of experience quality. Similarly, Cetin and Walls

(2016) explored hospitality experiences from guests' and managers' perspectives by conducting a qualitative study. They also used physical environment and human interaction as the core constructs of guests' experience. However, these two constructs (or dimensions) are not the components of guests' responses but the determinants of the results of interactions between guests and other service elements. Carbone and Haeckel (1994) indicated that organizations could generate customer experience by creating a physical environment (mechanic) and social interaction (humanic) encounters with service providers. In other words, providing a good quality of the physical environment and social interaction might mean not the guests' lodging experience itself but the prerequisites for offering positive guests' lodging experience.

To measure guests' lodging experience, it is fundamental to understand what kinds of variables should be used. Based on the definition of lodging experience, lodging experience can be regarded as a subjective response and a consequence resulted from the interactions between guests and other experience elements (e.g., physical environment, service employees). These subjective responses and results are functional, rational, affective, and emotional perceptions (Bueno et al., 2019). In other words, lodging experience can be measured by investigating the functional, rational, affective, and emotional perceptions resulting from interactions between organizations, related processes, service employees, and customers (Jain, Aagja, & Bagdare, 2017). Wong also mentioned that customer or service experience is "a unique concept that integrates various functional and emotional attributes into a comprehensive conceptualization and measure by which customers perceive and assess a service provider" (Wong, 2013, p.

92). In this regard, subjective lodging experience could be assessed by measuring the values of the lodging experience. In other words, guest lodging experience can be assessed by measuring how much values guests put on their lodging experiences because the changes of guests' values can be regarded as guests' subjective responses to their lodging experiences. Therefore, four variables of values of lodging experiences and two variables of potential long-term impacts were employed as the subjective and internal responses of guests to measure guest lodging experience: 1) monetary value of the experience, 2) time value of the experience, 3) emotional value of the experience, 4) escape value of the experience, 5) intention to recommend, and 6) memorability. The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1 in the Introduction section. The detailed descriptions for each construct follow.

1.2.2 Values of the Lodging Experience

Guests' perceptions of values of their lodging experience are utilized as a tool to measure their lodging experiences in this study. Perceived value has been defined as "the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). Although what is received (i.e., volume, high quality, or convenience) and what is given (i.e., money expended or time and effort) vary, the value represents a tradeoff of the salient give and get components (Zeithaml, 1988). Similarly, Petrick (2002) mentioned that "perceived value is a comparison of what a consumer receives with what the consumer gives for the attainment of a product or service" (p. 123). Oh (2000) also argued that perceived value

relates to the outcomes of comparing perceived quality and perceived sacrifice (e.g., the price paid, time spent). Ellis and his colleagues (2019c) explained perceived value as “the degree of contentment with the return on investment of personal resources (e.g., time, money, energy) on participation in a structured experience” (p. 105). Furthermore, perceived value is regarded as a direct consequence of perceived service quality (Oh, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988). Consequently, customers’ perceived quality of products, services, or experiences could be measured by assessing customers’ perceived values.

Perceived value has been measured based on a multi-dimensional concept (Petrick, 2002). Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) proposed a broader theoretical framework of perceived value. They suggested five dimensions of customer value, including functional, conditional, social, emotional, and epistemic values (Sheth et al., 1991). Kantamneni and Coulson (1996) proposed four dimensions of perceived values, including societal value, experiential value, functional value, and market value. Unlike previous measurement scales of perceived value that focus mainly on utilitarian components of products and services, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) developed the measurement scale of perceived value that includes quality, emotional, price, and social dimensions based on Sheth et al.’s (1991) model. In the field of hospitality and tourism, Petrick (2002) developed the measurement scale of perceived value of a service because previous research (i.e., Kantamneni & Coulson, 1996; Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) showed the measurement scale of perceived value of tangible products not services. He proposed that “dimensions of what a consumer receives from the purchase of a service include: the emotional response to the service, quality received from the

service, and the reputation of the service rendered. While the dimensions related to what is given, consist of monetary and non-monetary (behavioral) price” (Petrick, 2002, p. 123). Referring to and modifying the measurement scale of perceived value of a service developed by Petrick (2002), four dimensions of perceived value are considered in this study: 1) monetary value, 2) time value, 3) emotional value, and 4) escape value. The detailed descriptions of each dimension of perceived values follow.

1.2.2.1 Monetary value of the lodging experience

Pricing is defined in a variety of ways based on disciplines and pricing can be explained as profit-seeking in revenue management (Mattila & Gao, 2016). Zeithaml et al. (2006) asserted that price is the main extrinsic quality indicator of a product or service by addressing pricing from perceived quality and value perspective. In the hospitality industry, the price can be utilized as a positioning tool that differentiates one business from another (Mattial & Gao, 2016). Nair (2018) explained that “the room rate of hotel may be manipulated by the managers based on the size of the hotel in terms of employees and space, reputation, market standing, years of existence, geographic location, season, duration of stay, day of the week, and long term sustainability plans for hotel (Huang et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2011; Schamel, 2012; Xu & Gursoy, 2015; Xu et al., 2017)” (p. 2). In other words, many previous studies on price in the hotel context have been studied based on the hotels’ perspective.

From the guests’ point of view, price perceptions and acceptance play a critical role in affecting the guest’s consumption and post-consumption processes (Ali, Amin, &

Cobanoglu, 2016; Han & Ryu, 2009; Matzler, Bidmon, & Grabner-Krauter, 2006). In general, customers consider price as a cue in their expectations of the service quality (Han & Ryu, 2009). Besides, the price has been regarded as a determinant of value perceptions (Varki & Colgate, 2001). Previous studies on price have examined the effect of price on customer satisfaction and behavioral intention by using the terms such as price perception (e.g., Jiang & Rosenbloom, 2005), price fairness (e.g., Bolton & Lemon, 1999), or price acceptance (e.g., Ali et al., 2016). Moreover, the concept of willingness to pay has been employed to measure customers' monetary value (e.g., Homburg et al., 2005) and most studies on willingness to pay in the hotel context have focused on the guests' willingness to pay for a green or eco-friendly hotel (e.g., Kuminoff et al., 2010; Kang et al., 2012). However, this study will focus on two concepts, price fairness and willingness to pay because this study regards the guests' perception of price as one of the subjective responses to a lodging experience.

Perceived price fairness has been paid attention by researchers and managers in the hospitality and tourism industry that is an experience-centric business (Vrânceanu & Tuclea, 2016) because perceived price fairness plays a vital role in post-consumption evaluations of an experience (Jin, Line, & Merkebu, 2016; Martin-Consuegra et al., 2007). Price fairness is defined as “a consumer's assessment and associated emotions of whether the difference (or lack of difference) between a seller's price and the price of a comparative other party is reasonable, acceptable, or justifiable” (Xia, Monroe, & Cox, 2004, p. 3). In other words, price fairness is the judgment by comparing the buyer's perceived reference price and the seller's actual price (Martin-Consuegra et al., 2007) or

a subjective price perception and an evaluation of whether a price is reasonable and acceptable (Chung & Petrick, 2015; Monroe, 2003).

Zeithaml (1988) defined the concept of perceived price as “what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product” (p. 10) and asserted that three factors (i.e., objective price, perceived nonmonetary price, and sacrifice) affect price perceptions. In addition, Ferguson and Ellen (2013) argued that “to judge the fairness of a price, a consumer may judge the price according to the derived value, the price relative to other prices (i.e., those offered by competitors or paid by other customers), and/or the fairness of the price-setting practice” (p. 304). In other words, it needs internal references for comparison to deal with price fairness and consumers can use either past prices or competitors’ prices in terms of their price comparison (Bolton et al., 2004; Srikanjanarak, Omar, & Ramayah, 2009; Xia et al., 2004).

Generally, there are three streams of price fairness research: 1) using distributive, procedural, and interactive fairness, 2) connecting to the dual entitlement principle, and 3) employing the concept of reference transaction and reference price (Haddad, Hallak, & Assaker, 2015). The first stream is based on Adam’s (1965) equity theory.

Distributive fairness is concerned with the fair allocation of results and procedural fairness is regarded as whether the seller has played fair by complying with the rules of process when pricing products or services (Adams, 1965; cited by Haddad et al., 2015).

The second approach, dual entitlement principle, assumes that “Customers have perceived fairness levels for both an organization’s profits and retail prices by the belief that organizations are entitled to a profit, and customers are also entitled to a fair price”

(Bolton & Alba, 2006, p. 258). The third one uses two terms: reference price and reference transaction. Reference price is defined as “how much customers think a product or service should cost” (Wirtz et al., 2003, p. 219). Reference transaction is defined as consumers’ perceptions of the way that the transaction should be managed (Haddad et al., 2015; Kahneman et al., 1986). This study will follow the third approach, employing the concept of reference price. Because this study will conduct experiments and the participants will be asked to answer about the reasonable or acceptable price for the assigned scenario, it would seem to be appropriate to following the last approach.

Based on these three approaches, price fairness has been measured as either a unidimensional concept (e.g., Bechwati, Sisodia, & Sheth, 2009; Campbell, 2007; Jin et al., 2016) or a multidimensional concept (e.g., Diller, 2008; Xia et al., 2004). Although Chung and Petrick (2015) proposed the measurement scale of price fairness by regarding price fairness as a multidimensional concept, they mentioned that there is little consensus on the dimensionality of price fairness in the pricing literature. That is, there is no obvious conclusion about which measurement is better than another. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, this study will consider price fairness as a multidimensional concept and include three dimensions (i.e., price expectation, reference price, and room price perception; Haddad et al., 2015).

Willingness to pay can be defined as the maximum price the consumer agrees to pay for a given quantity of products or services (Cameron & James, 1987; Krishna, 1991; Nieto-García, Muñoz-Gallego, & González-Benito, 2017). Moreover, willingness to pay reflects the consumers’ perceived value (Kotler & Levy, 1969). In other words,

willingness to pay can be regarded as a measure of the value that a customer assigns to any kind of product or usage experience in monetary terms (Homburg et al., 2005; Namkung & Jang, 2017; Rao & Bergen, 1992).

A few scholars have focused on guests' willingness to pay for various hotel attributes (Masiero, Heo, & Pan, 2015). For example, Kuminoff et al. (2010) and Kang et al. (2012) examined guests' willingness to pay a premium in a green hotel context. They found that guests expect to pay higher premium for a green hotel. Wong and Kim (2012) investigated the differences in hotel guests' willingness to pay for different views from hotel rooms. Heo and Hyun (2015) investigated the effect of luxury amenities in the hotel room and found that luxury amenities increase both guests' estimation of the room rate and their willingness to pay for it. However, there is still a lack of knowledge to understand the effects of theme and service quality on customers' willingness to pay in the lodging context.

In the study of Petrick (2002), the construct of monetary price consists of six items: "...is a good buy," "is worth the money," "is fairly priced," "is reasonably priced," "is economical," and "appears to be a good bargain." Considering these six items, monetary price construct implies the concept of price fairness. However, it might not be possible to assess the exact amounts of monetary value that customers put on a service by utilizing this monetary price construct. In other words, it could be needed to modify the monetary price construct for the precise assessment of guests perceived monetary values. Therefore, one measurement item of the monetary value was established based on the review of existing literature on perceived monetary value, price

fairness, and willingness to pay. The detailed descriptions of the measurement scale follow in the method section.

I.2.2.2 Time value of the lodging experience

Zeithaml (1988) consumers sacrifice not only monetary price but also non-monetary price such as time costs, search costs, and psychic costs. In other words, non-monetary (or behavioral) price could be described as the price of obtaining a service (Petrick, 2002; Zeithaml, 1988) and one of main resources regarded as non-monetary price is time. When focusing mainly on time value, the measurement scale of perceived value of time spent proposed by Ellis et al. (2019b) can be utilized. He and his colleagues focused solely on exchange of time for experience because “perceived value of time investment is thus applicable to a broad spectrum of structured experiences, including those that do not involve such elements as monetary price, features of a product or service, or the reputation of the provider” (Ellis et al., 2019c, p. 5). The concept of perceived value of time spent was defined as “the degree of contentment an individual has with his or her return on investment of time committed to participation in a structured experience” (Ellis et al., 2019c, p. 5).

Although perceived time value has been conceptualized as customers’ time investment, a subtle difference the concept of perceived time value exists among various research on perceived time value. The meaning or definition of perceived time value depends on researchers’ intentions. For example, Petrick (2002) used the term of “Behavioral price” that Zeithaml (1988) defined as the non-monetary price to obtain a

service, including the time and effort used to search for the service. That is, perceived time value in the studies of Petrick (2002) and Zeithaml (1988) was addressed to focus on compare between what customer received and what customer sacrificed. On the other hand, Ellis et al. (2019b) described the concept of perceived value of time spent as time investment and focused on measuring how much time value customers put on their experiences. However, it is obvious that perceived time value has been utilized to measure how much time value customers put on products, services, or experiences they consumed. Therefore, time was used as one of tools to assess the value of subjective lodging experience by employing the measurement scale developed by Ellis et al. (2017).

I.2.2.3 Emotional value of the lodging experience

Sweeney and Soutar (2001) defined emotional value as “the utility derived from the feelings or affective states that a product generates” (p. 212). Petrick (2002) described emotional responses as “a descriptive judgment regarding the pleasure that a product or service gives the purchaser” (p. 125). As a service’s appeal is an “amalgam of rational and emotional factors” (MacKay, 1999, p. 182), emotional value or responses should be considered as one of perceived value components (Petrick, 2002; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Sweeney and Soutar (2001) argued that measurement scales of perceived value in previous studies used in focusing mainly on value for money. They mentioned that “The scale demonstrates that consumers assess products, not just in functional terms of expected performance, value for money and versatility; but also in terms of the

enjoyment or pleasure derived from the product (emotional value) and the social consequences of what the product communicates to others (social value)” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 216). Petrick (2002) agreed with Zeithaml’s argument, “quality and value are not well differentiated from each other and from similar constructs such as perceived worth and utility” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 471) and asserted that “one-dimensional measures of perceived value lack validity” (p. 122). By emphasizing the importance to measure non-monetary costs, Petrick (2002) contended that emotional responses should be included in measuring perceived value because emotional response has been identified as what a consumer receives from purchase. Therefore, it is better for researchers to consider emotional value as one of perceived value dimensions, thereby obtaining superior results of measuring customers’ perceived value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

I.2.2.4 Escape value of the lodging experience

Escapism is an experience that tourists actively seek (Oh et al., 2007). Escapism is high when customers’ attention is not focused on the routines and demands of their daily lives (Oh et al., 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) defined escapism as the extent to which an individual is completely engrossed and absorbed in the activity. Theme parks, adventure lands, simulated destinations, and themed attractions are typical examples of escapism experience (Hosany & Witham, 2010). Themes can be used invite customers to feel like they are in a different time, place, and set of circumstances (Ellis et al., 2019b; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Mossberg,

2007). Thus, themed experiences can be expected to yield subjective experiences of escapism.

The concept of escape in this study differs from escapism that is one of the dimensions of the experience economy. In their writing about the experience economy, Pine and Gilmore (2011) explain that escapism is more immersive than education and entertainment. Escapism requires consumers to participate in an activity (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Similarly, Oh et al. (2007) also described that participation in escape experiences means not only embarking *from* but also voyaging *to* a specific place and taking part in activities that are worthy of time. Mody et al. (2017) proposed the concept of the accommodation experiencescape including escape value. They found this experience industry conception of escapism to be related to extraordinary outcomes such as meaningfulness, well-being, and memorability. In contrast, in the current study, escapism is an experience that emanates from an array of lodging experiences, ranging from arrival to departure. This stream of experiences is influenced by various atmospherics (Bitner, 1992; Kotler, 1973) such as physical environment, mood, or multisensory stimuli.

1.2.3 Long-term Potential Impacts

“Perceptions of service quality lead to the purchase and experience rendered by the service. This experience results in the perception of the value received from the service. It is further postulated that perceived value influences intention to reinvest in the service experience, and how positively or negatively individuals talk to others about

their service experience” (Petrick, 2002, p. 123). In other words, perceived value is an outcome of service experience and affects intention to promote to others. Therefore, based on the definition of guest lodging experience, it could be reasonable to use perceived value as a tool to measure the lodging experience.

Many studies on perceived value in several academic fields such as consumer behavior (e.g., Oliver, 2010; Zeithaml, 1988), tourism (e.g., Petrick, 2002, 2004), and hospitality (e.g., Gallarza et al., 2015; Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012) have investigated. The results of studies indicated that perceived value has the positive effects on satisfaction (e.g., Bajs, 2015; Lee et al., 2007; Petrick & Backman, 2001), behavioral intention (e.g., Bajs, 2015; Williams & Soutar, 2009), and loyalty (Gallarza & Saura, 2006). Therefore, values of lodging experience might have the positive influence on guests’ intention to recommend and their memorability. In this study, guests’ intention to recommend and memorability were named as potential long-term impacts.

I.2.3.1 Intention to recommend

The concept of intention, dating to the pioneering work of Fishbein, Ajzen, and their colleagues (1975) has been a focus of extensive research in marketing, tourism, and hospitality management (Amaro & Duarte, 2015). The intention concept is particularly important because, under known circumstances, it provides a strong prediction of actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Ajzen (2002) explained that the more favorable the attitude toward behavior and the subjective norm, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger behavioral intention to perform the behavior should be.

Among the many types of intention that are important to managers and marketing professionals in the hospitality and tourism industry are the intention to repurchase, intention to revisit, and intention to engage in word-of-mouth (WOM) or electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) promotion. Customer's intention to promote via face-to-face or online is both the most effective marketing tool and the indicator reflecting customer loyalty. "The tendency of loyal customers to bring in new customers—at no charge to the company—is particularly beneficial as a company grows, especially if it operates in a mature industry" (Reichheld, 2003, p. 4). Reichheld (2003) emphasized the pivotal importance of WOM in producing profitability instead of customer satisfaction.

Generally, behavioral intentions have been regarded as a surrogate for actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and employed as a proxy measure of actual behaviors in the hospitality industry (Kang et al., 2012; Namkung & Jang, 2017). For WOM, as one of the behavioral intentions, there are several definitions. For example, Arndt (1967) defined WOM as face-to-face communication about a product or company between people who were not commercial entities and Harrison-Walker (2001) defined it as "informal, person to person communication between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, and organization, or a service" (Jeong & Jang, 2011, p. 357). With the rapid growth of Internet technologies, the concept of eWOM emerged. eWOM is defined as "all informal communications directed at consumers through Internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and service" (Litvin et al., 2008; cited by Jeong &

Jang, 2011, p. 357). Although there is a difference between WOM and eWOM, the fundamental role of WOM and eWOM is same.

Many studies have examined the effect of perceived service quality on customers' behavioral intentions such as WOM communication (Jeong & Jang, 2011). For example, Boulding et al. (1993) found that service quality influences customers' positive WOM. Zeithaml et al. (1996) argued that there is a positive relationship between perceived service quality and behavioral intentions (e.g., WOM, price sensitivity). In the same vein, Harrison-Walker (2001) investigated the effect of service quality on WOM communication and confirmed the fact that there is a positive relationship between perceived service quality and WOM intention. Jeong and Jang (2011) investigated the effect of restaurant experience on positive eWOM. They asserted that one of the eWOM motivations is expressing feelings. Sundaram et al. (1998) contended that expressing positive feelings (namely, WOM or eWOM) results from a positive consumption experience. Therefore, it could be understood that guests will have a high degree of intention to recommend if they have positive feelings that result from a positive lodging experience. Based on the body of literature, this study will define intention to recommend as "the guest's likelihood of recommending a specific hotel or its services to others."

I.2.3.2 Memorability of the lodging experience

Pine and Gilmore (2011) distinguished between commodities, goods, and services as follows: "whereas commodities are fungible, goods tangible, and services

intangible, experiences are memorable” (p. 17). They emphasized the importance of memorability by noting, “even though the work of the experience stager perishes with its performance, the value of the experience lingers in the memory of any individual who was engaged by the event” (Pine & Gilmore, 2011, p. 18). Similarly, Larsen (2007) observed that memory will remain after the experience has ended. Because memories remain accessible to future consciousness it is reasonable to assume they are a strong basis for future decision-making and intentions to recommend to others. Creating memorable experiences is the essence in the hospitality industry (Pizam, 2010).

It is obvious that experience and memories have a strong relationship. Previous research asserted that the beginnings and ends of experiences are remembered well. Also, the most extreme and final moment of the experience might be the most memorable (Burt, Kemp, & Conway, 2003; Cojuharenco & Ryvkin, 2008; Diener, Wirtz, & Oishi, 2001; Fredrickson & Kahneman, 1993), which is called the peak-and-end rule proposed by Fredrickson and Kahneman (1993). The peak-and-end rule postulates that how a person remember his or her experience is determined by the emotions associated with the most extreme moment and the end of an experience (Fredrickson & Kahneman, 1993). Peaks and endings are significant in shaping overall memories of emotional valence (Strijbosch et al., 2019) and emotions play a critical role in shaping the memory of an experience (Talarico & Rubin, 2017). The peak-and-end rule can be a robust predictor for how experiences are remembered emotionally and what the subsequent choice behaviors will be (Strijbosch et al., 2019). In contrast, a handful of research asserted that average valence could be a better predictor for remembered overall

valence than the peak-and-end measurement (Seta et al., 2008; Miron-Shatz, 2009; Schneider et al., 2011). Average valence has a high correlation with peak, end, and the average of peak-end (Cojuharenco & Ryvkin, 2008).

With the importance of memorable experiences, research on memorability of travel experience is growing. The importance of memory was highlighted by several authors (e.g., Cary, 2004; Larsen, 2007; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Ritchie et al., 2011; Selstad, 2007). The peak-end rule has been applied to tourist experiences. Kim and Kim (2019) found that the peak-end rule of tourist experiences was associated with travel and tourism behavior. Results of their study showed that the experiences were enhanced at the peak and end moments rather than at the most memorable event during tour activities. Well-staged experiences yield positive memories (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; 2011) and these memories shape customers' attitudes toward the provider's offerings (Oh et al., 2007). Memorability is a main tool of competitiveness and sustainability in the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Zatori, Smith, & Puczko, 2018).

Memories can be described as filtering mechanisms connecting the experience to emotional and perceptual outcomes of a specific event (Oh et al., 2007). Memorable experiences depend on both rational and emotional assessments (Barlow & Maul, 2000). In this study, monetary and time values of the lodging experiences were used as a rational assessment, while emotional and escape values of the lodging experiences were employed as an emotional assessment. Memorability of the experiences has been investigated from either a real-time perspective in on-site condition (Hosany & Gilbert,

2009; Oh et al., 2007) or retrospective perspective (Kim, 2014; Kim et al., 2010; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

1.2.4 Luxury Hotel Experiences – “Delighter”

“The sad truth is even good service experiences can be easily forgotten” –

Collier, Barnes, Abney, & Pelletier, 2018, p. 150

Based on the concept of experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 2011), offering high service quality to customers does not guarantee customers’ delight. High quality of service performance can lead to customer satisfaction. Although customers are satisfied with the services they purchased, these satisfied customers are not necessarily excited with services and service providers (Torres & Kline, 2006). Furthermore, customers talk about not appropriate or adequate service but extremely bad or extremely delightful service (Paul, 2000). Especially, as the standards of service quality have been raised in the competition between service providers at similar levels of service quality (e.g., competition between luxury hotels), excellent service quality cannot be regarded as a comparative advantage to survive in this keen competition. Besides, these raised standards of service quality have led to the increased levels of customers’ expectations, and thus customers might be rarely delighted with excellent service quality only. Consequently, it is the time for service providers to come up with innovative ideas to make their customers delighted by upgrading their offerings from satisfactory services to memorable and delightful experiences. In the luxury hotel context, it is a situation that needs additional strategies to delight their guests. Guests stay at the luxury hotels are

generally provided excellent or high-quality services at every service encounter. It has been more difficult to differentiate the hotel services from competitors' services and to make hotel guests delighted based on the excellent services only.

Based on the Kano model proposed by Noriaki Kano and his colleagues in 1984, he and his colleagues divided customer preferences (or requirements) into five categories: must-be, one-dimensional, indifferent, reverse, and attractive attributes. The Kano model was developed originally to identify the attributes of a product or a service that a business should consider during new developments of products or services or improving businesses' products or services based on the results of attribute categories. Unlike various measurement scales concerning service quality (e.g., SERVQUAL, LODGSERV, LODGQUAL), the Kano model can be used to diagnose whether there are any other attributes to make the customer delighted by including more various attributes regarding a service that a business is providing than those of service quality measurements. The strategies of experience industry proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 2011) can be regarded as tools to add attractive attributes into a business's services.

In the context of the luxury hotel, unlike a budget hotel, hotel managers should implement experience industry strategies. Managers of luxury hotels provide excellent quality of services that are not easily differentiated from those of other luxury hotels. In addition to this, price is not one of the strongest factors affecting guests' decision-making and lodging experiences in the luxury hotel industry. Premium prices and a prestigious image are critical characteristics of luxury products, and thus luxury

consumers may react negatively to price discounts or promotions due to an individual-level trait—the need for status (Yang, Zhang, & Mattila, 2016). Therefore, luxury hotel managers need to find delighters. In this study, theme (or theming) is considered as a delighter or an attractive attribute and investigated its effect on guests' subjective lodging experiences.

1.2.5 Theme (or Theming)

Theming service encounter is a prominent trend in a wide variety of sphere, including theme parks, shopping malls, casinos, hotels and even cities (Hung, Wang, & Tang, 2015). Theming is recognized as one of the most effective tools that service providers can utilize to upgrading their offering from ordinary services to extraordinary experiences (Åstrøm, 2017; Gilmore & Pine, 2002). Effective theming can be a key factor in creating an irresistible customer impression and differentiating from competitors in a market where their offerings are less distinguishable from those of their competitors (Gottdiener, 2001). Because of the critical role of theming, theming has been studied by some scholars in a variety of fields such as advertising (Olson, 2004), festivals and event management (Allen & Harris, 2002; Bladen et al., 2012; Bowdin et al., 2011; Getz, 2012; Robinson, 2015), marketing innovation and research (Gothelf et al., 2010; Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2013), and strategy and strategic marketing (Brown & Patterson, 2000; Lillestol et al., 2015; Ponsonby-McCabe & Boyle, 2006; Wong & Cheung, 1999).

Although research on the producing experiences has been well studied in hospitality, tourism and leisure (Sundbo, 2015), theming as one of powerful strategies to evoke positive customer experience has been overlooked in the hospitality and tourism literature (Åstrøm, 2017). In the context of hospitality, existing studies on themes have considered that a theme is analogous with “design” and focused mainly on the physical attributes. In addition, many researchers have proposed the concepts related to producing customer’s experience, such as “experiencescape (e.g., Mody et al., 2017; Pizam & Tasci, 2019),” “hotelscape (Alfakhri, Harness, Nicholson, & Harness, 2018),” “festivalscape (Lee, Lee, Lee, Lee, & Babin, 2008).” However, these studies have not examined how themed servicescapes affect the quality of the customer’s experience. For instance, Suess, Mody, and Dogru (2018) investigated the effect of constructing accommodations around a home-like environment (named “Homescape”) on psychological experience and well-being. They found that homescape has a positive effect, but this study has not considered a themed servicescape built on a story. In other words, there is a lack of evidence about the effect of a themed servicescape on the quality of consumer’s experience. Therefore, it is necessary to verify whether there is an effect of themed servicescapes on the customer’s experience or not.

I.2.5.1 Definition and history

Despite the increasing interests in theming among industry leaders and scholars, there is no clear definition of theme in the realm of hospitality and tourism. The concept of theme varies according to the purpose of study and context. Holbrook and Hirshman

(1982) asserted that a theme is represented by a set of related cues that are intended to arouse a fantasy and imaginary journey to a different time or place (cited by Gao et al., 2016). Mossberg (2007) defined a theme as “the underlying concept for everything staged in a particular place” (p. 69). Similarly, Ellis et al. (2019b) defined a theme as a set of tangible and intangible cues that suggest a storyline of being in a different time, place, and set of circumstances. In sum, the concept of the theme means not only a set of tangible cues (e.g., physical environment, costumes, music, etc.) but also a set of intangible cues (i.e., a story). A themed environment that has been designed to tell a story in which the visitor plays a part provides significant entertainment value (McGoun, Dunkak, Bettner, & Allen, 2003). Similarly, Bryman (2004) asserted that a narrative plays an important role in separating theming from minor decorative changes. That is, themes can be derived from stories (Mossberg, 2008).

“A global trend in the experience industry is to build an entire business or parts of a business around a story” (Mossberg, 2008, p. 195). Mossberg (2008) emphasized the importance of servicescape (developed by Bitner in 1992) built on a story and asserted that this themed servicescape is more important for hedonic services compared to utilitarian services. This is because hedonic services usually have a long duration (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994) and “consumers visit themed servicescapes not only to buy products but also to engage in fantasies, feelings, and fun (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Pine & Gilmore, 1999)” (Mossberg, 2008, p. 198). Mossberg (2008) also differentiated between two concepts of the theme and a story: “The theme can be an idea, a subject or an underlying theme that permeates something. In a themed

environment, a narrative form might be used but it is not necessary. A story, on the other hand, is built on common fundamental elements in dramaturgy, such as message, conflict, division of roles and action” (Mossberg, 2008, p. 199). Mossberg’s (2008) differentiation can be understood that servicescape built on a theme and a storyline differs from service environments where a selected subject or idea is merely presented.

Several options for defining a theme thus exist, and it is essential to select a specific definition in order for the research to proceed. This study will adapt Taggart et al.’s (2019) definition: “a set of tangible, intangible, and communicative cues (*genus proximum*) that suggest a storyline of being in a different time, place, and set of circumstances (*differentia specifica*).” Based on this definition, the following Aristotelian definition (Zetterberg, 1964) of a themed servicescape will be used: “a service environment (*genus proximum*) where a set of substantive and communicative cues are presented to make guests feel being in a different time, place, and set of circumstances (*differentia specifica*).”

I.2.5.2 Functions and effects of theme (or theming)

Themes serve specific functions. They can serve as the dominant idea or organization principle (Åstrøm, 2018; Gilmore & Pine, 2002) for an activity or experience. Theming can also serve as the staging process unifying structure and organization based on a theme (Åstrøm, 2018; McLellan, 2000; Scheurer, 2004; Strömberg, 2015). Organizations employ theming as a tool to orchestrate an integrated experience through both physical means and the more abstract dimensions that pertain to

the physical place (Åstrøm, 2018). Based on previous research, Åstrøm (2019) listed various objectives of theming.

- stimulate and direct consumption (Young & Riley, 2002)
- offer an escape from reality (Brown & Patterson, 2000)
- aid people in remembering a key idea or a message (Ham, 1992)
- create brand tangibility (Kozinets et al., 2002)
- create standardized audience effects such as comfort, pleasure, and contentment (Adkins, 2005)
- create unique and different events (Allen & Harris, 2002)
- commodify urban experiences (Amin & Thrift, 2002)
- quasification such as fabricate a “pretend” experience environment (Beardsworth & Bryman, 1999)
- enhance the quality of a guest experience (Ellis & Rossman, 2008)
- entertain and educate consumers about history, lifestyle, and culture (Wood & Muñoz, 2007)
- overwhelm consumers with omnipresent and omnipotent brand identity (Galician, 2013)
- influence behavior (Pearce & Wu, 2016); and
- represent a specific culture (Ebster & Guist, 2005) (p. 5-6).

One of the important roles of theming could be to turn a service into an experience effectively and automatically (Åstrøm, 2017). Theming can create an irresistible customer impression (Åstrøm, 2019; Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). Mossberg

(2008) asserted that it is possible to turn an ordinary experience into an extraordinary experience by using theming based on storytelling. Gilmore and Pine (2002) explained that using themes enables service providers such as hotels to upgrade their offerings from ordinary service to extraordinary experiences. In other words, theming can act as a tool to attract not only first-time consumers but also repeat purchasers (Åstrøm, 2017; Weaver, 2006, 2011), thereby giving a competitive advantage to a service provider and making a service or offering be comprehensive holiday environments (Weaver, 2005).

More recently, Åstrøm (2019) explored the marketing functions of theming: 1) differentiation, 2) increase sales, 3) create bonds, 4) attract, stop, and make visitors stay, and 5) enhance the end-to-end experience. Differentiation is regarded as creating a unique identity for a given space and it can create a uniqueness of services. Furthermore, it is possible to increase sales through theming that changes the service experience for the better and adds unique value. For creating bonds between guests and the theme, it is understood that theming adds value to the experience that makes guests feel like they are connected to the place. Regarding attracting, stopping, and making visitors stay is related to influencing and modifying customers' behaviors. It means that theming is a technique to draw attention, motivate, and attract customers. For enhancing the end-to-end experience, it is connected to the customer journey. "An end-to-end experience is a customer perspective that starts with the first contact between the customer and the organization, including all touchpoints until the customer returns home, with any follow up (Voss, 2004)" (Åstrøm, 2019, p. 13).

Although there are many functions of theming (e.g., differentiation; increase sales; create bonds; attract, stop, and make visitors stay; and enhance the end-to-end experience), there is a lack of knowledge about a theme and theming in academic field, especially in hospitality and tourism era (Åstrøm, 2019). Åstrøm (2019) asserted that “businesses that trade in services want their offerings to be memorable to distinguish themselves from competitors. Businesses can do this by creating experiences out of their services. These experiences are events that cause emotional and physical responses from their customers. Theming is a method of creating such responses by shaping and designing the surrounding environment” (p. 6).

1.2.6 Service Quality

Existing research on service quality has shown that service quality is a significant predictor of behavioral intention (Bitner, 1990). Service quality is highly correlated with satisfaction (Brown & Swartz, 1989). Excellent service quality results in consumer satisfaction, which promotes consumer loyalty (Lee, Madanoglu, Ha, & Fritz, 2018; Madanoglu, 2006; Martinelli & Balboni, 2012). However, consumers’ expectations continue to escalate (Leonard & Sasser, 1982; Lewis & Mitchell, 1990; Takeuchi & Quelch, 1983) and continually satisfying consumers becomes difficult (Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017). In addition to these trends, businesses in most service industries encounter an increasingly competitive environment (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990). In this context, one of the survival strategies is to differentiate services and offer higher quality of service than competitors (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Service quality is thus a key

factor for differentiating services and building a competitive advantage (Hudson & Shepard, 1998). In order to survive in intensifying competition, therefore, it is essential to understand what service quality is and how it can be measured. For this reason, the SERVQUAL and SERVPERF models were developed. Those models advance the science and practice of management, and parallel forms of these have been created for use in the hospitality industry. The following sections provides a review of those models and evaluate their pros and cons.

I.2.6.1 The concept of service quality

I.2.6.1.1 What does quality mean in the concept of service quality?

Before understanding the service quality, it is important to clarify the concept of “quality.” Definitions of quality vary considerably among the leaders of the leading pioneers of the quality management movement. Williams and Buswell (2003) provide a summary of these definitions. Deming defined quality as “predictable degree of uniformity and dependability at low cost.” Juran’s definition of quality was “fitness for intended purpose.” Shewhart defined quality as “conformance to requirements,” and Peters asserted that quality is “customer perception of excellence.” Clearly, as a concept, “quality” is a complex construct.

Complexity in defining quality is also evident in the service literature. In the services literature, quality is often expressed as perceived quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Zeithaml (1987) defined perceived quality as the consumer’s evaluation about an entity’s overall excellence or superiority. Parasuraman et al. (1988) asserted that

perceived quality is different concept from objective quality, as defined by Garvin (1983) and Hjorth-Anderson (1984). Parasuraman and his colleagues stated that perceived quality is “a form of attitude, related but not equivalent to satisfaction, and results from a comparison of expectations with perceptions of performance” (Parasuraman et al., 1988, p. 15). Holbrook and Corfman (1985) classified quality into two types of quality: mechanistic and humanistic qualities. “Mechanistic involves an objective aspect or feature of a thing or event; humanistic involves the subjective response of people to objects and is therefore a highly relativistic phenomenon that differs between judges” (Holbrook & Corfman, 1985, p. 33). Holbrook and Corfman (1985) indicated that quality plays a role as a relatively global value judgment. Similarly, Olshavsky (1985) regarded quality as a form of overall evaluation of a product. Based on the definitions and conceptualization of quality, researchers have made enormous efforts to define and measure service quality.

1.2.6.1.2 The characteristics of service are different from those of goods

Parasuraman et al. (1985) noted that although efforts in defining and measuring quality have come largely from the goods sector, it is not sufficient to understand service quality. This insufficiency is present because characteristics of service differ from those of goods. Parasuraman et al. (1985) thus suggested that acknowledging different service characteristics (i.e., intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability) is essential for a full understanding of service quality. Most services are intangible, and cannot be counted, measured, inventoried, tested, and verified in advance of sale to assure quality. The

performances of services, furthermore, often varies from providers to providers, from consumers to consumers, and from day to day. In addition to these, production and consumption of most services are inseparable. Within these different characteristics of service, service businesses may find it more difficult to grasp how consumers perceive service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Unlike the quality of goods, moreover, there is no tangible evidence, such as style, hardness, color, label, package, etc. Therefore, intangible cues are very important when measuring the quality of services. Moreover, the evaluations of service quality involve evaluations of the process of service delivery. Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1991) explained service quality is “formed by the qualitative levels of a service on different dimensions of the service production process” (p. 288). As a result, measuring service quality should focus not only on the outcome of a service but also on the process of service delivery (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

1.2.6.1.3 What the definition of service quality will guide this research?

Clearly, several options for defining service quality exist. It is essential to select or construct a particular definition in order for well-designed research to proceed. Based on the Zeithaml's (1988) definition, the following Aristotelian definition (Zetterberg, 1964) of service quality will be used: “the customer's assessment (*genus proximum*) of the overall excellence of the service provided (*differentia specifica*).” Thus, service quality is “the outcome of an evaluation process, where the consumer compares his expectations with the service the perceives he has received” (Grönroos, 1984, p. 37).

Existing literature on service quality reflect three clear themes:

- The quality of service differs from that of goods because of its different characteristics,
- In evaluation process, not only the outcome, but the delivery process also is included, and
- Consumer's evaluation is proceeded by comparing his/her expectation with perception.

As the formal definition of service quality shows, service quality is the customers' evaluation resulted from the comparison between consumers' expectations and perceptions. That is, service quality depends on how consumers perceive the service. Garvin (1984) explained that if services meet customers preferences and expectations, these services are considered to be of high quality. Grönroos (1982) also contended that consumers compare their expectations of service with their perceptions of the service they receive in evaluating the quality of service. Similarly, Parasuraman et al. (1985) stated that perceived service quality is the result of the consumers' comparison of expected service with perceived service. As aforementioned, the concept of quality in measuring service quality means the perceived quality. The perceived quality differs from objective quality. It is a result from a comparison of expectations with perceptions of performance (Haywood-Farmer, 1988). Grönroos (1982) and Fick and Ritchie (1991) claimed that perceived service quality is interpreted from the level and direction of the differences between perceptions and expectations of consumers. In other words, a

customer's evaluation of overall service quality depends on the gap between expectations and perceptions of service quality levels (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988).

I.2.6.2 History and emergence of service quality models

Unlike the quality of goods, previous studies indicated that it is difficult to measure the quality of service. Because the characteristics of services are different from those of goods (i.e., intangibility, heterogeneity, the inseparability of production and consumption, and perishability) (Richard & Allaway, 1993). For instance, due to intangibility, service firms have a difficulty in agreeing on objective standards by which to evaluate intangible service offerings. Because of heterogeneity, arriving at agreed-upon measure of service quality across firms, employees, consumers, and time periods might be problematic (Zeithaml, 1988). In order to overcome these difficulties, some scholars attempted to develop a model of service quality. SERVQUAL and SERVPERF are representative of these attempts. Detailed explanations follow.

According to Oh and Parks (1996), several scholars have applied SERVQUAL in hospitality and tourism studies (e.g., Bojanic & Rose, 1994; Getty & Thompson, 1994; Saleh & Ryan, 1991). Most researchers have modified SERVQUAL for the specific situations in the realm of hospitality and tourism. For instance, Bojanic and Rosen (1994) identified six factors, compared to the original five factors, underlying the levels of expectations and perceived performance of restaurant customers. Saleh and Ryan (1991) focused on application of SERVQUAL concepts in the context of lodging

services. Getty and Thompson (1994) developed a scale, called LODGQUAL, to measure service quality in the lodging industry.

Recently, Lai, Hitchcock, Yang, and Lu (2018) reviewed the literature on service quality in the hospitality and tourism field. They found that scholars developed and tested different service quality scales in the introducing stage (1984-1993). In the growth stage (1994-2003), many researchers developed distinctive dimensions for measuring service quality in different industries such as DINESERV for the restaurant (Stevens, Knutson, & Patton, 1995) and TANGERV for food services (Raajpoot, 2002). In the maturity stage (2004-2014), researchers began focusing mainly on subordinate areas such as GPTCCC for group package tours (Wang, Hsieh, Chou, & Lin, 2007), THEMEQUAL for theme parks (Tsang, Lee, Wong, & Chong, 2012), FESTPERF for festivals (Tkaczynski & Stokes, 2010), E-S-QUAL for electronic service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Malhotra, 2005) and CASERV for casino (Wong & Fong, 2012). Over one hundred measurement scales have been developed in different tourism and hospitality sectors in the last thirty years (Lai et al., 2018).

I.2.6.3 History of debate: SERVQUAL vs. SERVPERF

I.2.6.3.1 SERVQUAL

SERVQUAL developed by Parasuraman et al. (1998) is concise multiple-item scale. In 1985, Parasuraman et al. found that the criteria used by customers in evaluating service quality fit 10 possibly overlapping dimensions. These dimensions were (1) tangibles, (2) reliability, (3) responsiveness, (4) communications, (5) credibility, (6)

security, (7) competence, (8) courtesy, (9) understanding/knowing the customer, and (10) access. These dimensions utilized as the basic structure of the SERVQUAL scale. After several examinations of the contents enumerated above, Parasuraman et al. (1998) suggested the final items making up each of SERVQUAL's five dimensions. They asserted that overall service quality is judged based on five underlying dimensions as follows (Parasuraman et al., 1998, p. 23):

- Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel
- Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
- Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
- Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence
- Empathy: Caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers

Two dimensions (i.e., Assurance and Empathy) include elements representing seven of the original dimensions that do not appear individually (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Parasuraman et al. (1991) offered the modified method of calculating SERVQUAL scores. SERVQUAL includes a total of 22 items and these items are divided into five dimensions as follows; (1) items 1-4 refer to the Tangibles, (2) items 5-9 refer to the Reliability, (3) items 10-13 refer to the Responsiveness, (4) items 14-17 refer to the Assurance, (5) items 18-22 refer to the Empathy (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2. The measurement items of SERVQUAL (Expectation)

ITEM	Description
Tangibles (4 items)	They should have up-to-date equipment Their physical facilities should be visually appealing Their employees should be well dressed and appear neat The appearance of the physical facilities of these firms should be in keeping with the type of services provided
Reliability (5 items)	When these firms promise to do something by a certain time, they should do so When customers have problems, these firms should be sympathetic and reassuring These firms should be dependable They should provide their services at the time they promise to do so They should keep their records accurately
Responsiveness (4 items)	They shouldn't be expected to tell customers exactly when services will be performed (-) It is not realistic for customers to expect prompt service from employees of these firms (-) Their employees don't always have to be willing to help customers (-) It is okay if they are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly (-)
Assurance (4 items)	Customers should be able to trust employees of these firms Customers should be able to feel safe in their transactions with these firms' employees Their employees should be polite Their employees should get adequate support from these firms to do their jobs well
Empathy (5 items)	These firms should not be expected to give customers individual attention (-) Employees of these firms cannot be expected to give customers personal attention (-) It is unrealistic to expect employees to know what the needs of their customers are (-) It is unrealistic to expect these firms to have their customers' best interests at heart (-) They shouldn't be expected to have operating hours convenient to all their customers (-)

Note: Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). Servqual: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.

Table 3. The measurement items of SERVQUAL (Perceived performance)

ITEM	Description
Tangibles (4 items)	XYZ has up-to-date equipment XYZ's physical facilities are visually appealing XYZ's employees are well dressed and appear neat The appearance of the physical facilities of XYZ is in keeping with the type of services provided
Reliability (5 items)	When XYZ promises to do something by a certain time, it does so When you have problems, XYZ is sympathetic and reassuring XYZ is dependable XYZ provides its services at the time it promises to do so XYZ keeps its records accurately
Responsiveness (4 items)	XYZ does not tell customers exactly when services will be performed (-) You do not receive prompt service from XYZ's employees (-) Employees of XYZ are not always willing to help customers (-) Employees of XYZ are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly (-)
Assurance (4 items)	You can trust employees of XYZ You feel safe in your transactions with XYZ's employees Employees of XYZ are polite Employees get adequate support from XYZ to do their jobs well
Empathy (5 items)	XYZ does not give you individual attention (-) Employees of XYZ do not give you personal attention (-) Employees of XYZ do not know what your needs are (-) XYZ does not have your best interests at heart (-) XYZ does not have operating hours convenient to all their customers (-)

Note: Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). Servqual: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.

Parasuraman et al. (1988) asserted that measuring the quality of a service is linked to calculating the difference between the ratings consumers assign to paired expectation/perception items. Thus, a SERVQUAL score is calculated as follows:

$$\text{The Score of Service Quality} = \text{Perception Score} - \text{Expectation Score}$$

Not only the score of each specific dimension but an overall global service quality score can be obtained by averaging the dimension average scores (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Taylor & Cronin, 1994).

The fundamental paradigm is to measure consumers' expectations and perceptions concerning a service encounter (Fick & Ritchie, 1991). Based on the five

dimensions, SERVQUAL measures the magnitude and direction of the discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations of service quality. Each respondent is presented with a set of items regarding expected performance and another set of items with respect to perceived performance. Expectation items are intended to measure how much of service quality should be, while perception items are intended to measure how much of a service quality perceived by consumers. The resulting gap scores are assumed to be viable indicators of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

SERVQUAL received significant recognition in service marketing research. Because it is designed to be applicable across a wide spectrum of services. This instrument can be adjusted or extended if it is necessary to fit the specific needs of a specific area. For lodging industry, several measurement scales were developed: LODGQUAL (Getty & Thompson, 1994), LODGSERV (Knutson, Stevens, Wullaert, Patton, & Yokoyama, 1990), and HOLSERV (Mei, Dean, & White, 1999). The detailed explanations follow in each section.

Clearly, there are some critics among researchers, such as Cronin and Taylor (1992). The main issue Cronin and Taylor pointed out is the problematic basis of the SERVQUAL scale. They argued that SERVQUAL's foundation concept leads to the confusion with service satisfaction. They, thus, asserted that expectation component should be discarded (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Jain & Gupta, 2004). Regarding of this reason, Cronin and Taylor proposed a different model of service quality in 1992, SERVPERF. A description of SERVPERF follows.

1.2.6.3.2 SERVPERF

Cronin and Taylor (1992) questioned the approach SERVQUAL model used. They asserted that the conceptualization and operationalization of SERVQUAL are inadequate. The main defect of the SERVQUAL measure they argued is “little if any theoretical or empirical evidence supports the relevance of the expectation-performance gap as the basis for measuring service quality” (Cronin & Talyor, 1992, p. 56). Some marketing studies indicated that simple performance-based measure of service quality is superior to the expectation-performance gap-based measure (i.e., SERVQUAL) (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Mazis, Ahtola, & Klippel, 1975; Woodruff, Cadotte, & Jenkins, 1983). Cronin and Taylor (1992) agreed with their argument and attempted to propose a better model to measure service quality. In 1992, they developed and tested a performance-based alternative to the SERVQUAL, they named it as “SERVPERF.”

SERVPERF has been recognized as the most famous alternative to SERVQUAL. While SERVQUAL measures service quality based on the comparison between consumers' expectation and perception, SERVPERF measures service quality by estimating performance only. In this new model, Cronin and Taylor (1992) measured service quality with the same dimensions as SERVQUAL. Because they judged that 22 items in five dimensions developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) are very well grounded. SERVPERF uses only performance items due to the fact that respondents provide their ratings by automatically comparing performance perceptions with performance expectations (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). That is, there is a great risk that expectations will

be contaminated by perceptions of the actual service provided (Getty & Thompson, 1995). After developing and testing their new model, they asserted that SERVPERF is superior to SERVQUAL because SERVPERF is able to explain more of the variance in the overall estimation of service quality than SERVQUAL. In addition to this, they argued that the SERVPERF scale is more efficient because the SERVPERF reduced the number of items (i.e., expectation items) to be measured.

Many studies have discussed whether SERVQUAL or SERVPERF should be employed for measuring service quality (e.g., Cui, Lewis, & Park, 2003; Hudson, Hudson, & Miller, 2004; Jain & Gupta, 2004; Kettinger & Lee, 1997; Mukherje & Nath, 2005; Quester & Romaniuk, 1997). Carrillat, Jaramillo, and Mulki (2007) conducted a meta-analysis study on the validity of the SERVQUAL and SERVPERF scales. They mentioned that debate on whether disconfirmation-based measure (i.e., SERVQUAL) is superior to performance-only based measure (i.e., SERVPERF) have continued (Carrillat et al., 2007). More recently, Machado, Ribeiro, and Basto (2014) compared between SERVQUAL and SERVPERF. They also concluded that it is not yet clear which measurement scale is the best to measure service quality.

The main critic of employing these two measurement scales (i.e., SERVQUAL and SERVPERF) is whether the five dimensions and 22 items of the scales are generally applicable in all service contexts (Ladhari, 2009). Carman (1990) also argued that SERVQUAL cannot be applied without modifications across most service sectors and the five dimensions of SERVQUAL may not be proper for all types of services. Due to this problematic issue, adaptations and/or replacements of SERVQUAL have been

recommended for diverse industry-specific contexts (Ladhari, 2008). In the hospitality and tourism industry, one hundred more measurement scales have been developed in different sectors in the last thirty years (Lai et al., 2018). Because this research focuses on the service quality in the lodging industry, the next section describes several measurement scales for lodging service quality, such as LODGQUAL, LODGSERV, HOLSERV, and Lodging Quality Index (LQI).

I.2.6.4 Measurement scales of service quality in lodging industry

I.2.6.4.1 LODGSERV

Knutson et al. (1991) argued that the hospitality industry needs a valid tool for measuring two sides (i.e., expectations and perceptions) of the service quality construct. They, therefore, benchmarked Parasuraman et al.'s (1988) SERVQUAL and developed LODGSERV. LODSERV was specifically modified for the lodging industry and initially contained 36 items and five dimensions. After several testing processes, 10 of the original 36 items were shown to not contribute meaning to the index and deleted. A final version of LODGSERV consists of 26 items (Table 4).

Table 4. The measurement items of LODGSERV

ITEM	Description
Reliability (4 items)	Equipment Works Dependable/Consistent Quickly Correct Problems Services On-Time
Assurance (5 items)	Trained/Experienced Employees You Feel Comfortable Company Supports Employees Knowledgeable Staff Reservationists Are Knowledgeable
Responsiveness (3 items)	Prompt Service Staff Shift Where Needed Do Special Requests
Tangibles (6 items)	Neat Personnel Quality Food/Beverage Attractive Room Décor Reflects Concept Attractive Public Area Up-To-Date Equipment
Empathy (8 items)	You Feel Special/Valued No Red Tape Sympathetic Employees Sensitive Employees Convenient Hours Anticipates Your Needs Complimentary Services Has Healthful Menus

Note: Knutson, B., Stevens, P., Wullaert, C., Patton, M., & Yokoyama, F. (1991). LODGSERV: A service quality index for the lodging industry. *Hospitality Research Journal*, 14(2), 277-284.

1.2.6.4.2 LODGQUAL

LODGQUAL has been developed for a specific situation in the hotel industry.

Getty and Thompson (1995) asserted that lodging quality possesses many dimensions including the physical characteristics of the facilities and the human elements.

LODGQUAL is based on SERVQUAL and revised the dimensions of SERVQUAL for measuring lodging quality. They identified three basic dimensions of lodging service quality based on Churchill's (1979) processes for developing and validating multi-item

measures of constructs. The three dimensions are tangibles (8 items), reliability (4 items), and contact (10 items), unlike LODGSERV. The contact dimension encompasses SERVQUAL's responsiveness, empathy, and assurance dimensions. The detailed description of measurement items is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The measurement items of LODGQUAL

ITEM	Description
Tangibles (8 items)	Front desk was visually appealing
	Employees had neat, clean uniforms
	Rooms were comfortable
	Property was bright and well lighted
	Property was well maintained
	Property was clean
	Mechanical equipment worked correctly
	Property provided a safe environment
Reliability (4 items)	Room service orders were correct
	Room service bills were correct
	Meeting arrangements carried out OK
	Check-in/out procedures were efficient
Contact (10 items)	Employees greeted me with a smile
	Employees helped me solve problems
	Reservations were made accurately
	Employees accurately answered questions
	Employees were committed to a good job
	I received individual attention
	Reservations made an effort to accommodate my needs
	Employees were eager to please me
	Employees understood my problem
	Employees listened to me

Note: Getty, J. & Thompson, K. (1995). The relationship between quality, satisfaction, and recommending behavior in lodging decisions. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 2(3), 3-22.

1.2.6.4.3 HOLSERV

Mei et al. (1999) argued that the five dimensions of SERVQUAL failed to confirm across different industries and it is necessary to customize the scale for the

hospitality industry. They employed the expectation-perception gap-based construct and developed a new measurement scale, named HOLSERV. They added eight items to the original SERVQUAL scale and deleted three items. The HOLSERV consists of three dimensions: employees, tangibles, and reliability (a total of 27 items, see Table 6). They asserted that “the HOLSERV scale is a shorter, more user-friendly version of SERVQUAL” (Mei et al., 1999, p. 140).

Table 6. The measurement items of HOLSERV

ITEM	Description
Employees (13 items)	<p>Gives prompt service</p> <p>Always willing to help</p> <p>Never too busy to respond to guests' requests</p> <p>Instils confidence in guests</p> <p>Guests feel safe in the delivery of services</p> <p>Polite and courteous employees</p> <p>Have the knowledge to answer questions</p> <p>Have the skill to perform the service</p> <p>Gives individual attention</p> <p>Deals with guests in a caring fashion</p> <p>Has guests' best interests at heart</p> <p>Understands guests' specific needs</p> <p>Neat and professional employees</p>
Tangibles (8 items)	<p>Equipment, fixtures and fittings are modern looking</p> <p>Facilities are visually appealing</p> <p>Materials are visually appealing</p> <p>Fixture and fittings are comfortable</p> <p>Equipment and facilities are easy to use</p> <p>Equipment and facilities are generally clean</p> <p>Variety of food and beverages meet guests' needs</p> <p>Services are operated at a convenient time</p>
Reliability (6 items)	<p>Promises to provide a service and does so</p> <p>Shows dependability in handling service problems</p> <p>Performs the service right the first time</p> <p>Provides services at the time it promises to do so</p> <p>Tells guests exactly when the services will be performed</p> <p>Guests feel safe and secure in their stay</p>

Note: Mei, A. W. O., Dean, A. M., & White, C. J. (1999). Analysing service quality in the hospitality industry. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 9(2), 136-143.

I.2.6.4.4 Lodging Quality Index (LQI)

Getty and Getty (2003) applied SERVQUAL to the lodging industry and defined the original ten dimensions of SERVQUAL in the context of lodging quality. After then, they purified the measurement and proposed the initial 63 items representing each of the ten dimensions of SERVQUAL. After several tests for developing an instrument, they developed the final lodging quality index (LQI) including five dimensions and 26 items (Table 7).

Table 7. The measurement items of LQI (Lodging Quality Index)

ITEM	Description
Tangibility (8 items)	The front desk was visually appealing The employees had clean, neat uniforms The restaurant's atmosphere was inviting The shops were pleasant and attractive The outdoor surroundings were visually attractive The hotel was bright and well lighted The hotel's interior and exterior were well maintained The hotel was clean
Reliability (4 items)	My reservation was handled efficiently My guestroom was ready as promised TV, radio, A/C, lights, and other mechanical equipment worked properly I got what I paid for
Responsiveness (5 items)	Employees responded promptly to my requests Informative literature about the hotel was provided Employees were willing to answer my questions Employees responded quickly to solve my problems Room service was prompt
Confidence (5 items)	Employees knew about local places of interest Employees treated me with respect Employees were polite when answering my questions The hotel provided a safe environment The facilities were conveniently located
Communication (4 items)	Charges on my account were clearly explained I received undivided attention at the front desk Reservationists tried to find out my particular needs Employees anticipated my needs

Note: Getty, J. M., & Getty, R. L. (2003). Lodging quality index (LQI): assessing customers' perceptions of quality delivery. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 15(2), 94-104.

I.2.6.5 Integration of service quality research

Abundant studies have indicated that enhanced service quality has positively affected customer decision-making since the early 1980s (Gummesson, 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1985). In addition to this, numerous empirical studies found that high quality of services promotes customer satisfaction and loyalty (e.g., Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Dagger, Sweeney, & Johnson, 2007; Fornell, 1992). That is, service quality is a key determinant for the success of businesses in today's competitive market environment (Wu & Ko, 2013). The tourism and hospitality industries are not exempt from service quality concerns (Brown, Bowen, & Swartz, 1992; Tsaur & Lin, 2004). In the hotel industry, it is essential to differentiate one hotel's services from those of its competitors in order to survive in a highly competitive marketplace (Wu & Ko, 2013). To differentiate service quality and provide the high quality of services, it is imperative to define the quality of hotel services and develop an appropriate tool for measuring service quality (Mei et al., 1999; Nadri & Hussain, 2005).

To fully understand the concept of service quality and its measurement scales, this study reviewed existing research on service quality in both marketing field and tourism and hospitality realm. As a key factor for differentiating services and building a competitive advantage, many researchers have paid enormous attention to the concept of service quality. They have attempted to define service quality and develop instruments to measure service quality. SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) are representative measurement scales of service quality. Although there is a debate on SERVQUAL versus SERVPERF, it is obvious that two

measurement scales suggested a great outline and dimensions for measuring service quality. Within the developed dimensions of SERVQUAL or SERVPERF, it is possible to modify the specific dimensions and items for specific industry situations.

In the lodging industry, some researchers (e.g., Getty & Thompson, 1995; Getty & Getty, 2003; Knutson et al., 1991; Mei et al., 1999) recognized that the dimensions and items of SERVQUAL or SERVPERF are not appropriate to the hotel context. They have developed the measurement scales of service quality for the lodging industry by adding, deleting, or replacing the items or dimensions of SERVQUAL. For instance, Knutson et al. (1991) created “LODGSERV,” including 26 items and five dimensions. Getty and Thompson also developed an instrument for measuring lodging service quality, “LODGQUAL.” LODGQUAL consists of three dimensions and 22 items. Mei et al. (1999) asserted that it is essential to modify the SERVQUAL scale for measuring service quality in the hospitality industry. They developed “HOLSERV” which is a shorter and more user-friendly version of SERVQUAL. Furthermore, in 2003, Getty and Getty proposed “Lodging Quality Index (LQI)” in order to measure the lodging service quality precisely. LQI is comprised of five dimensions and 26 items.

Nevertheless, there are pros and cons with regard to employing the developed measurement scales for measuring the quality of service. The representative models of service quality (i.e., SERVQUAL and SERVPERF) have offered the guidelines for measuring service quality, such as dimensions and items of service quality. Despite the great guidelines of service quality, the dimensions and items of SERVQUAL may not be

applicable to all types of the service industry. To overcome this disadvantage, many researchers have developed a variety of tools for different contexts of service industries.

The modified measurement scales, however, may not include all dimensions and items for measuring service quality. A majority of revised instruments are based on the dimensions and items of SERVQUAL. Some researchers have attempted to add specific dimensions or items to the original SERVQUAL's dimensions and items. Nevertheless, these efforts seem to focus mainly on SERVQUAL and researchers were not willing to depart from the guideline given by SERVQUAL. In order to measure service quality more precisely, it is essential for researchers to adopt the tools used in the real world and take a practical or business-centric view. With regard to the measurement scale of lodging service quality, for instance, researchers should refer to "Star rating system" developed by Forbes Travel Guide and "Diamond rating system" developed by AAA. These hotel rating systems provide more various and strict standards. Guests believe the evaluation results that affect their future decision-making.

One of the purposes of the study is to examine the effects of service quality on guests' lodging experience. To achieve this goal, this study will consider not only the guidelines given by previous studies (e.g., SERVQUAL, LODGQUAL, LODGSERV, HOLSERV, and LQI) but also two representative hotel rating criteria (i.e., Star rating and Diamond rating systems) when designing the level of service quality.

I.3 Laboratory Experiments and Simulation

There is debate in the social sciences about laboratory experiments and field studies (Kim & Jang, 2014). A number of scholars in the hospitality and service marketing fields prefer to employ laboratory experiments for advancing causal knowledge (Falk & Heckman, 2009). Critics of experimental methods argue that people's behavior in both the laboratory and hypothetical scenarios are not connected to their behavior in the field (Falk & Hackman, 2009; Kim & Jang, 2014). Common criticisms are that the artificial conditions of the experiment yield unrealistic data (Bardsley, 2005) and experimental studies may be subject to an experimenter demand effect (Orne, 1962). Among criticisms, an important criticism is that the external validity of the results of scenario experiments are questionable (Kim & Jang, 2014) because people's behavior may be sensitive to several factors that systematically vary between the laboratory and real-world settings (Levitt & List, 2007).

In contrast, researchers who use experimental methods assert that they provide a high level of internal validity by manipulating and controlling variables and avoiding the expense and ethical issues involved in real settings (Kim & Jang, 2014). Schendel and Hofer (1979), who supported the use of experimental methods, mentioned that the control inherent in experimental methods increases the ability to examine causal-effect relations. Furthermore, experimental methods are ideal for investigating questions that cannot be dealt with through field research due to access problems and expense. Camerer (2011) rebutted the criticisms by presenting the results of his comparison study that shows there is no difference in the effect sign, coefficients, and correlations between

laboratory experiments and field studies. Despite the advantages of experimental methods, it might not be able to escape from the criticism that experimental methods could potentially limit the generalizability of results to only the specific study context (Victorino & Dixon, 2016). Therefore, researchers who use experimental methods should take on the challenge of retaining high levels of internal validity without degrading the external validity of a research study (Victorino & Dixon, 2016).

If ecological validity is guaranteed, simulation can be used in experimental studies. Simulation has been used as an interchangeable term with role playing and employed in studies for years. Role playing is defined as “a research technique in which the researchers ask a subject to behave as if he or she were in some situation” (Surprenant & Churchill, 1984, p. 122). Surprenant and Churchill (1984) identified five conditions in which simulation is appropriate as follows:

- when subjects are forecasting their own behavior;
- when there is no embarrassment;
- circumstances are familiar;
- the research situation is simple; and
- hypotheses limited to main effects (p. 125)

The advantages and disadvantages of employing simulation technique are similar to the strengths and weaknesses of using experimental methods. Regarding the advantages of using simulation technique, there are several situations in which employing simulation would be beneficial: when constructs are too difficult to measure in real settings; when manipulating multiple factors at once; testing inaccessible groups;

or when examining expensive products (Surprenant & Churchill, 1984). In terms of the disadvantages of employing simulation technique, Surprenant and Churchill (1984) stated that the participants may not be able to see themselves in that situation and the researchers may not be able to yield the participant involvement that is found in real settings.

There are a variety of ways to employ simulations such as written description, static pictures, videos, or a combination of these. Among these, videos have been used successfully to simulate different experiences and environments in several studies. Carpman, Grant, and Simons (1985) supported using simulations because “researchers can bring potential environment users’ inside’ and ‘through’ an environment that otherwise exists only on paper” (p. 311) by using video simulations. Carpman et al. (1985) also asserted that simulations can be more cost effective method than creating the real setting. In general, each video scenario or vignette represents a condition based on the experimental design and researchers ask participants to view and provide their responses to a video scenario to examine differences between treatments (Sparks, Bradley, & Callan, 1997; Victorino & Dixon, 2016). Many researchers asserted that video experiments offer researchers both a high level of control over what the participants will experience and the ability to express the dynamic and intangible nature of services (e.g., Seawright & Sampson, 2007; Sparks et al., 1997).

The heightened degree of realism associated with a video-based scenario increases external validity (Victorino & Dixon, 2016). To raise the external validity of laboratory experiments, researchers may create their experiment so that it looks and feels

as close to the real settings or experience as possible. Privitera (2014) asserted that it could be possible to improve external validity by increasing the mundane realism, the experimental realism, or both in a research study. “Mundane realism is the extent to which a research setting physically resembles or looks like the natural environment being simulated. Experimental realism is the extent to which the psychological aspects of a research setting are meaningful or feel real to participants” (Privitera, 2014, p. 184). Video experiments allow researchers to mitigate some of the ecological validity risk, with realistic and immersive representations of service or experiences, while retaining the strong internal validity of a research study (Victorino & Dixon, 2016).

I.4 Summary and Hypotheses

With the growth of the global luxury hotel market size, providing valued lodging experiences for their guests has become one of the key factors for the success in a highly competitive market. The values of the lodging experiences include monetary value (Grewal et al., 2009; Bagdare, 2013), time value (Ellis et al., 2019a), emotional value (Petrick, 2002), and escape value (Hosany & Witham, 2010; Mody et al., 2017). Maximizing these values may lead to potential long-term impacts such as favorable long-term memories (Mody et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2007; Tung & Ritchie, 2011) and positive word-of-mouth (Reichheld, 2003).

To yield highly valued lodging experiences based on the Kano model (Kano, 1984), satisfiers, dissatisfiers, and delighters of the lodging experiences should be managed well. That is, it is essential not only to deliver excellent quality of service

(Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988) as satisfiers and dissatisfiers but also to implement “experience economy” (Pine & Gilmore, 2011) strategies such as theming (Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Ellis & Rossman, 2008) as delighters. No previous research, however, has directly examined the individual or joint effects of service quality and theming on valued lodging experiences (Mody et al., 2019).

Recent research results suggest that theming and service quality may interact in their influence on subjective experiences (Ellis et al., 2019a, 2019c). However, this interaction effect hypothesis was supported in the context of short-term “structured experiences,” not in the context of hotel stays (Ellis et al., 2019c). Hotel stays differ in very substantial ways from individual structured experiences. Hotel stays typically involve a wide array of structured experiences, such as dining, shopping, drinking, and using business and fitness centers. Other lines of inquiry imply that theming may directly and independently influence values of lodging experiences (Åström, 2019; Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Also, research on the magnitude of the effect of service quality on lodging experience values is limited. The lodging experience value construct advanced in this dissertation has not been tested empirically. Accordingly, the following hypotheses about lodging experience value will be tested:

Hypothesis 1. The effect theming on the value of guest lodging experiences (i.e., monetary value of the experience, time value of the experience, emotional value of the experience, and escape value of the experience) depends on the level of service quality.

Hypothesis 2. Theming increases lodging experience value (i.e., monetary value of the experience, time value of the experience, emotional value of the experience, and escape value of the experience).

Hypothesis 3: As service quality improves, lodging experience value increases.

Further, the model presented as Figure 1 proposes that values of the lodging experience are related to two potential long-term impacts: intention to recommend and memorability. This assumption has not been tested empirically. Thus, the following hypothesis about the relation between values of the lodging experience and potential long-term impacts will be tested:

Hypothesis 4. As the value of guest subjective lodging experiences increases, long-term potential impacts (i.e., intention to recommend and memorability) increase.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

II.1 Overview of Methods

This chapter describes methods used to conduct the study. An overview may be helpful before presentation of the methodological details. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of theming and service quality on the quality of lodging experience of guests during a video-simulation of a stay at a luxury hotel. Four hundred fifty-three members of the Texas A&M Association of Former Students completed questionnaires after viewing one of six randomly assigned videos. Each video depicted five phases of a guest visit: arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out. Each video also represented a unique combination of effects of theme and service quality creating a fully crossed, 2 (theme: present or absent) by 3 (service quality: excellent, moderate, poor) experimental design (Figure 2). Monetary, time, emotional, and escape values of the lodging experience were measured, and long-term potential impacts (i.e., intention to recommend and memorability). Details of the method are presented in the sections that follow.

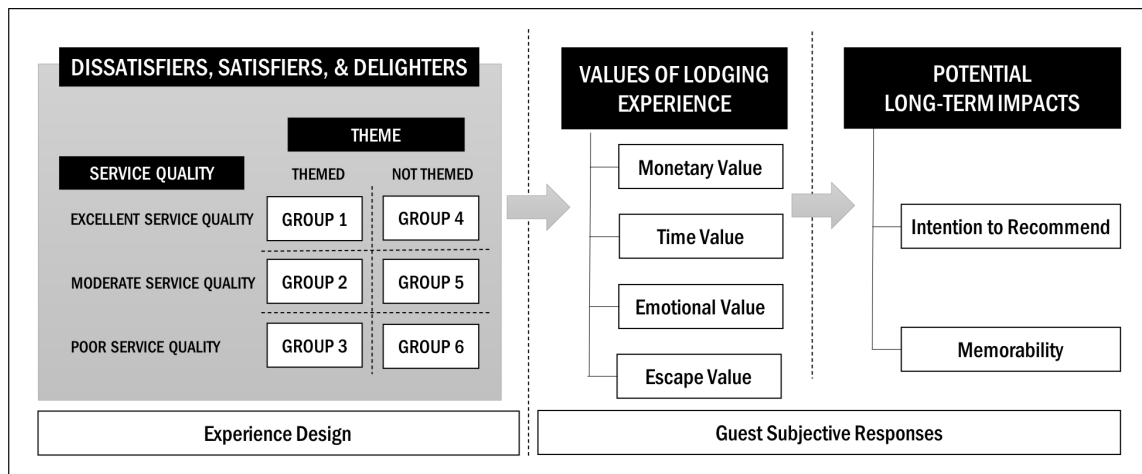


Figure 2 Research Design

II.2 Participants

Former students at Texas A&M University were recruited as research participants through the cooperation with the Association of Former Students of Texas A&M. The Association of Former Students of Texas A&M reported that Texas A&M University has produced 508,207 former students since 1876 and about 97% of former students live in the United States. Despite these factors mentioned by the Association of Former Students of Texas A&M, 3% of former students might live out of the United States. Although the target population was 97% of former students of Texas A&M who live in the United States, the accessible population might include 3% of former students who live out of the United States. The sample is selected among the accessible population and observations made in the sample are generalized to the target population (Privitera, 2014). Thus, research participants in this study were selected from the accessible population and their responses could be generalized to the target population

(i.e., the entire former students of Texas A&M University). Furthermore, one of the important reasons to choose former students at Texas A&M as the target population was that their annual household incomes are relatively high. Because lodging experience at luxury hotels was the research subject of this study, participants should have higher annual household income. Demographic information of samples verified this key factor (see Table 8). In this regard, the collected samples in this study could be regarded as a representative sample. A representative sample can be described as “one in which the characteristics of individuals or items in the sample resemble those in a target population of interest” (Privitera, 2014, p. 126). Therefore, it could be stated that the collected samples were representative of the target population and able to be used to generalize the results to the target population.

Power analysis was conducted to estimate the appropriate sample size (Cohen, 1988). Power is defined as the probability of correctly rejecting a false null hypothesis. A variety of factors affect power (Myers & Well, 2003), but the most salient of these are sample size and effect size. Using a conservative effect size of .06, G*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) showed that a sample size of 200 would yield a 95% probability of correctly detecting a false null hypothesis. An email request for participation among 20,000 Texas A&M Association of Former Students yielded 453 responses (response rate = 2.265%). The power associated with that sample size is .999 ($F_{8, 890} = 1.949$, Pillai $v = .113$), given an effect size of .06. All four hundred fifty-three responses were analyzed. The observed power for the full MANOVA model approached unity for the two main effects, and was .946 for the interaction effect.

Table 8 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample. The sample was 50.6% female and 47.9% male. Approximately 75% of participants were between the ages of 30 to 59. Most participants were White / Caucasian (86.4%). In terms of income, 40.8% participants responded their income was more than \$150,000. Seventy percent of participants were employed full-time and 14.0% were retired. Regarding participants' marital status, 75.1% participants responded being married.

Table 8. Demographics

Item	N (%)	Item	N(%)
<i>Sex (n=453)</i>		<i>Income (n=451)</i>	
I prefer to not respond	7 (1.6%)	I prefer to not respond	47 (10.4%)
Male	214 (47.9%)	Less than \$15K	2 (0.4%)
Female	226 (50.6%)	\$15K – Less than \$30K	5 (1.1%)
<i>Age (n=439)</i>		\$30K – Less than \$45K	18 (4.0%)
21-29	40 (9.1%)	\$45K – Less than \$60K	19 (4.2%)
30-39	107 (24.4%)	\$60K – Less than \$75K	26 (5.8%)
40-49	96 (21.9%)	\$75K – Less than \$90K	24 (5.3%)
50-59	126 (28.7%)	\$90K – Less than \$105K	34 (7.5%)
60-69	51 (11.6%)	\$105K – Less than \$120K	46 (10.2%)
More than 70	19 (4.3%)	\$120K – Less than \$135K	20 (4.4%)
<i>Race (n=447)</i>		\$135K – Less than \$150K	26 (5.8%)
I prefer to not respond	14 (3.1%)	More than \$150K	184 (40.8%)
Native American /Alaskan	2 (0.4%)	<i>Employment (n=449)</i>	
Native		I prefer to not respond	5 (1.1%)
Asian	18 (4.0%)	Employed full time	316 (70.4%)
Black / African American	6 (1.3%)	Employed part time	27 (6.0%)
White / Caucasian	386 (86.4%)	Unemployed	2 (0.4%)
Other	21 (4.7%)	Retired	63 (14.0%)
<i>Education (n=445)</i>		Other	36 (8.0%)
I prefer to not respond	2 (0.4%)	<i>Marital Status (n=449)</i>	
Some college, but no degree	3 (0.7%)	I prefer to not respond	9 (2.0%)
College degree	196 (44.0%)	Not married	103 (22.9%)
One or more graduate school degree(s)	244 (54.8%)	Married	337 (75.1%)

II.3 Materials: Six Videos

Six videos were produced, based on a 2 by 3 experimental design (theme: present or absent; service quality: excellent, moderate, poor). Contents of each of the six videos are summarized in Table 9. Real photos were collected and used to produce each video. Also, the narrative was added to describe several detailed conditions that real photos could not present. To increase the quality of videos, the narrator was a theater major with performance history at a major university in the United States. Each video included features of a five-star hotel, according to the standards of Forbes's star rating and the American Automobile Association (AAA) diamond rating. Forbes's star rating criteria includes service detail, facilities detail, guest room detail, and specialized facility detail. AAA's diamond rating criteria details standards of both physical attributes (e.g., curb appeal, parking lot, lobby, illumination, etc.) and intangible services provided from reservation through departure. Features from these two lists of standards and representing five service quality categories (e.g., SERVQUAL, Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988) were represented in each video: tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy. For example, the arrival phase at a four-star or four-diamond hotel included a distinctive hotel façade, a well-maintained parking lot, and a garden. All these features were considered in the six videos.

In addition to the five star and diamond rating, each video represented one of three levels of service quality (i.e., excellent, moderate, or poor). To accomplish the service quality manipulation, questionnaire items from established lodging industry service quality measurement scales were reviewed (i.e., SERVQUAL, Parasuraman et

al., 1985, 1988; LODGQUAL, Getty & Thompson, 1995; LODGSERV, Knutson et al., 1991; HOLSERV, Mei et al., 1999; LQI, Getty & Getty, 2003). Service quality actions indicated by those questionnaire items were represented in the videos. An item from LODGSERV (Knutson et al., 1991), for example, is an attractive public area and room.

Table 9. Six scenarios representing each of six treatment conditions

Scenarios	Theme	Service Quality
Scenario 1, 1 YTES	Props and cues depicting an imaginary hotel's history as a jail were presented throughout guests' vicarious visit to the hotel, and they also encountered several thematically relevant stories (e.g., interior and exterior, employees' uniform, event)	Excellent service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)
Scenario 1, 2 NTES	No theme was presented	Excellent service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)
Scenario 2, 1 YTMS	Props and cues depicting an imaginary hotel's history as a jail were presented throughout guests' vicarious visit to the hotel, and they also encountered several thematically relevant stories (e.g., interior and exterior, employees' uniform, event)	Moderate service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)
Scenario 2, 2 NTMS	No theme was presented	Moderate service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)
Scenario 3, 1 YTPS	Props and cues depicting an imaginary hotel's history as a jail were presented throughout guests' vicarious visit to the hotel, and they also encountered several thematically relevant stories (e.g., interior and exterior, employees' uniform, event)	Poor service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)
Scenario 3, 2 NTPS	No theme was presented	Poor service quality was depicted in each of five phases of the experience (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out)

Note. YTES: Themed and excellent service quality, NTES: Not themed and excellent service quality, YTMS: Themed and moderate service quality, NTMS: Not themed and moderate service quality, YTPS: Themed and poor service quality, NTPS: Not themed and poor service quality

Attractiveness is an element of the “tangibles” dimension of the service quality questionnaires. Thus, the arrival phase of the excellent service quality video was designed to show an exceptionally attractive exterior. In the corresponding poor service quality video, the hotel’s exterior as presented as unattractive. As another example, an item from LQI (Getty & Getty, 2003) is “employees knew about local places of interest” in the “confidence” dimension. The guest received information about interesting local places from hotel’s employees in the excellent service quality video, while the guest did not obtain any information about the local places from hotel’s employees in the poor service quality video.

TripAdvisor (www.tripadvisor.com) reviews of the hotel modeled in the videos were also used to identify specific service quality features to systematically include or exclude to represent the three levels of service quality. The selected elements were from actual guest experiences and were thus intended to heighten the realism of the videos. Guests’ complaints and compliments between November 16th to 17th, 2019 were extracted from those TripAdvisor reviews. All three service quality scenarios were constructed using these complaints and compliments.

The hotel’s history as a jail was used as the theme for this study. Three videos were constructed as theme-present and three were constructed as theme-absent. In the theme-present videos, guests were experienced the jail theme through a variety of props, cues (e.g., the hotel’s exterior, interior, and amenities were in the jail theme, employees’ uniforms looked like policeman), and stories (e.g., stories relevant to a jail were presented). Stories were presented by using materials such as brochures, wall hangings

and through a tour of the hotel's jail museum. In the theme-absent video, no props or cues signaling the presence of a theme were provided. This approach to manipulation of theme was consistent with Mossberg's (2008) research, "Extraordinary experiences through storytelling." Mossberg (2008) conducted a case study of the Klaus K hotel case and suggested the theme creation process by using a storytelling strategy.

The model tested (Figure 1 and Chapter 1) proposes that service quality features may be classified as satisfiers, dissatisfiers, and delighters. Briefly, satisfiers are features that increase satisfaction if provided or present and decrease satisfaction if not provided or present. Dissatisfiers elicit dissatisfaction if present, but their absence does not increase satisfaction. Delighters are unanticipated, value-added features that elicit responses that transcend satisfaction. Table 10 provides a list of service quality features incorporated into the video and the classification of each.

Table 10. Classification of service quality features as satisfier or dissatisfier

Service Feature	DS	SA	DL
Your hotel was either themed or not themed			X
A valet staff member enthusiastically greeted you		X	
A valet staff member and all of his fellow employees wore neat and clean uniforms		X	
A valet staff unloaded your luggage skillfully		X	
A staff member engaged you in friendly conversation as she escorted you to the front desk		X	
The unique design of the lobby (themed or not themed)			X
A staff member briefly explained the information about the hotel services and properties		X	
A front desk agent who had been diligently working on another task immediately turned her attention to you		X	
A front desk agent had a nametag and was dressed in neat and clean uniform		X	
A front desk agent's warm greeting		X	
Offered you a glass of champagne		X	
A front desk agent quickly found your reservation		X	
A front desk agent gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with brief information of the hotel (including the jail history theme)			X

Table 10. Continued

Service Feature	DS	SA	DL
A front desk agent provided the clear instructions		X	
Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that you could get in the elevator in less than one minute		X	
The hallway looked very clean and very quiet	X		
Signs clearly directed you to your room	X		
In your room, you noticed the pleasing aroma of a blend of white tea with wood cedar and vanilla	X		
All furniture and items were well-organized and in good order		X	
The carpet was very clean and plush	X		
Your room temperature was perfect; neither too cold nor too hot	X		
Your room was large and well-proportioned, with a comfortable seating area	X		
The furniture was top-quality and seating was very comfortable, including arrangements for television viewing	X		
Fully enclosed clothes-hanging space with more than ten wood removable matching hangers were provided	X		
Storage space was more than enough for your two pieces of luggage	X		
The quality of bed linens was outstanding	X		
Your bed was a top-quality foam mattress like those other luxury hotels use	X		
Sheets were triple sheeting and well fitted	X		
Your pillow collection included both down (feathers) and foam options		X	
The wall and night tables next to the bed were very clean	X		
Your room was very quiet; You could not hear anything from outside of your room	X		
Your bathroom was elegant; it had a unique style, with luxurious fixtures and artistic elements		X	
Your bathroom was very clean	X		
The bathroom was spacious; it allowed you generous ease of movement, comfort, and relaxation		X	
Large framed mirrors and top-quality marble shower walls were highlights		X	
You enjoyed the aroma of lemon and lime blossom notes		X	
Your water pressure was appropriate to take a pleasant shower	X		
It took only a couple of seconds for the water to get hot	X		
When you arrived at the hotel restaurant, a desk staff member greeted you with a smile		X	
A desk staff member escorted you to a comfortable waiting area and handed you a drink and a menu		X	
Your menu included an impressive variety of food and beverage		X	
The food prices were very reasonable		X	
A server escorted you to your seat in the restaurant	X		
Your food was delicious; it was well seasoned		X	
When you arrived at the hotel bar, a server immediately greeted you and escorted you to your seat		X	
The drink prices were very reasonable		X	
The menu options of room service were extensive		X	
Your breakfast was delivered within five minutes of time promised		X	
Your host surprised you with a morning newspaper		X	
Your food was served at the proper temperature	X		
Your host provided instructions for the tray removal	X		
All dishware and linens were of an upscale quality and looked like a brand-new		X	
Throughout the delivery process, your host used your name		X	

Table 10. Continued

Service Feature	DS	SA	DL
Your host showed a sincere desire to satisfy all of your requests		X	
After having your breakfast, you called to request that the dishes be removed.		X	
Within a few minutes, a staff member removed your dishes with a warm and sincere smile			
Express check-out services were available 24 hours / seven days a week		X	
Several front desk agents were serving guests	X		
You waited less than three minutes		X	
Upon check out, the front desk agent asked you about your stay	X		
The front desk agent explained an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee)	X		
The front desk agent confirmed your payment method and provided a copy of the bill for you to review	X		
The front desk agent expressed a warm and sincere thank-you for staying at the hotel and sincerely invited you to return		X	
With a warm escort by a staff member, you arrived at the exit			X
The valet had your car waiting		X	
The valet checked all of your belongings and placed them in your car	X		

Note. Service quality features are in the excellent service quality video. DS: Dissatisfier, SA: Satisfier, DL: Delighter; The results of categorizing service features into three dimensions of the Kano model depends on each hotel. Therefore, it could be possible that a service feature classified as a dissatisfier in this study might not be categorized as a dissatisfier.

All six videos depicted imaginary guest experiences during each of five sequential phases of the “customer journey” of a guest at a luxury hotel: arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out (Stickdorn, Hormess, Lawrence, & Schneider, 2018). A general template for these experience journey maps is presented in Figure 3. The journey map described the service quality and theming features for each video.

Journey Map for Guests of Luxury Hotels

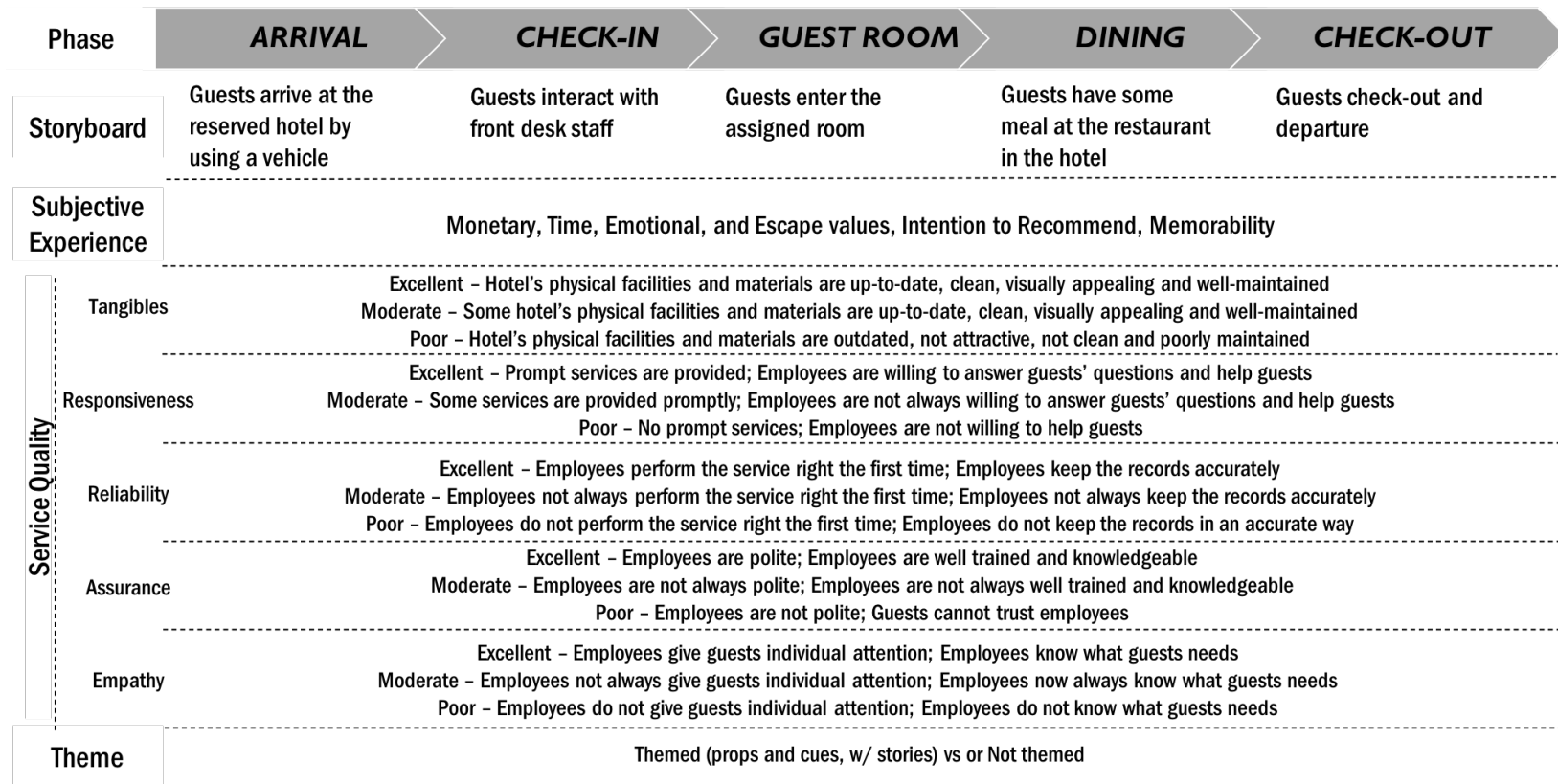


Figure 3 Guest Journey Map

II.4 Measurement Scales

Participants were randomly assigned to one of six scenarios by the “randomizer” feature of the online application, Qualtrics. After viewing the video to which they were randomly assigned, participants completed measures of their lodging experience quality: monetary value, time value, emotional value, escape value, intention to recommend, and memorability. A description of the scales used to measure those concepts follows.

II.4.1 Measures of Values of the Lodging Experience

II.4.1.1 Monetary value

Consistent with McCarville et al. (1993), guest’s willingness to pay was defined as the price participants expected to pay for the specific hotel depicted in the video scenarios. A single question was used: *The average price a guest pays for a single night stay in a five-star hotel in a major city in the U.S. is **\$400**. What is a **fair price for a single night experience** at this hotel, given your experience would be like what you saw in the video?*

The sentence indicating \$400 was the average price of a five-star hotel in the major city in the U.S. depicted in the video provides the “reference price” (McCarville et al. 1993) that is essential to reliable measurement of willingness to pay (or a fair price). Five-star hotels, of course, vary in price according to the city or resort area in which they are located. Research participants needed a reference price to make a realistic decision about the amount they are willing to pay for the lodging experience and the price they

think it is fair depicted in the video they watched. An electronic slider ranging from \$0 to \$1,000 was used.

II.4.1.2 Time value

Zeithaml (1988) defined perceived value as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given (p. 14). Petrick (2002) identified five dimensions of value of a travel service: behavioral price, monetary price, emotional response, quality, and reputation. Both Zeithaml (1988) and Petrick (2002) encompassed monetary and non-monetary aspects in the concept of perceived value. In contrast, Ellis, Taggart, Martz, Lepley, and Jamal (2016) focused mainly on the perceived value of time spent. Following their work, perceived value of time spent was defined as the individual's degree of contentment with her or his decision to stay at the lodging facility depicted in the video she or he viewed. Five items were included:

- *Staying at this hotel would be an excellent use of my time*
- *I would be glad that I chose this hotel*
- *I would have made a good choice if I decided to stay at this hotel*
- *I would wish I had spent my time at a different hotel (reverse-coded for scaling)*
- *Staying at this hotel would be worth the time I put into it*

A 100-point electronic, "slider" scales was used to maximize variation.

II.4.1.3 Emotional value

Emotional response is a judgment about the pleasure that a product or service gives the purchaser (Sweeney et al., 1998; cited by Petrick, 2002, p. 125). Emotional responses comprised one of the five factors identified by Petrick (2002) in his study of the value of travel experiences. The following items from that factor were included in this study:

- *This hotel experience would make me feel good*
- *This hotel experience would give me pleasure*
- *This hotel experience would give me a sense of joy*
- *This hotel experience would make me feel delighted*
- *This hotel experience would make me feel happy*

A 100-point “slider” scale was used to gather responses.

II.4.1.4 Escape value

Escape value is one of experience economy dimensions (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). To measure escape value of the lodging experience, Oh et al.’s (2007) and Mody et al.’s (2017) measurement scales of escape value were employed. The following items were included in this study:

- *The hotel experience shown in the video would make me feel I was in an exciting new world*
- *The hotel experience shown in the video would make me feel I was in a different time or place*

- *I completely escaped from reality during the hotel experience shown in the video*

A 100-point electronic, “slider” scales was used for responses.

II.4.2 Measures of Potential Long-term Impacts

II.4.2.1 Intention to recommend

Reichheld (2003) developed a “net-promoter score,” arguing that it is the single customer metric businesses must monitor in order to succeed. The net promoter score is the ratio of promoters to detractors, based on responses to items measuring consumers’ proclivity to promote a product or service. Reichheld (2003) asserted that “By substituting a single question—blunt tool though it may appear to be—for the complex black box of the typical customer satisfaction survey, companies can actually put consumer survey results to use and focus employees on the task of stimulating growth” (p. 3). Ellis et al. (2019c) measured proclivity to promote by using a single-item measure. In this study, Ellis et al.’s (2019c) item was employed. Participants answered using a 100-point response format, with higher scores indicating greater intention to recommend the hotel. The scale was anchored with ‘extremely likely’ and ‘not at all likely.’ The item is as follows:

- *If a friend, relative, or colleague asked, how likely is it that you would **recommend** this hotel, given your experience was like what you saw in the video?*

II.4.2.2 Memorability of the lodging experience

To measure the memorability of the lodging experience, three items were derived from the previous studies conducted by Oh et al. (2007, Tung and Ritchie (2011), and Mody et al. (2017). Three items are as follows:

- *I would have wonderful memories about my hotel experience*
- *I would remember many positive things about my hotel experience*
- *I would often go back in my mind to re-experience positive memories from my hotel visit*

A 100-point electronic, “slider” scales was used.

II.4.3 Manipulation Checks

Two manipulation checks were included. The first manipulation check was to confirm manipulation of the theme-present vs. theme-absent manipulation. A questionnaire item read, “*We have several versions of the video you watched. In some versions, a hotel employee described the history of the hotel to the guest. Do you recall whether an employee described the history of the hotel in the video you viewed?”*

Participants answered as follows: “___ *Yes, an employee described the history of the hotel,*” “___ *No, an employee did not describe the history of the hotel,*” or “___ *I do not recall whether or not an employee described the history of the hotel.*” The second question was a check on manipulation of service quality, there were questions about five dimensions of service quality (i.e., tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and

empathy proposed by Parasuraman et al., 1988). Specifically, the questions for manipulation check on service quality are as follows:

- ***Tangibles:*** *Everything was clean, neat, orderly. Everything worked correctly*
- ***Reliability:*** *Hotel employees were reliable and dependable*
- ***Responsiveness:*** *Hotel employees were responsive; they provided prompt services*
- ***Assurance:*** *Hotel employees inspired the visitor's confidence; they made him or her feel they would quickly and efficiently solve any problems she or he had*
- ***Empathy:*** *Hotel employees were polite and courteous*

II.5 Procedure

The data were collected online from a sample of Texas A&M University former students. An agent of the Association of Former Students agreed to use the Association's mail lists for this purpose. The Association includes 508,200 members, and the agent distributed the link to a random sample of 20,000 of those members. Each participant received an email describing the study and inviting him or her to participate. If the email recipient chose to participate, she or he selected a link (anonymous link created by Qualtrics) embedded in the email. The link directed the individual's computer signal to the online survey platform, Qualtrics. Qualtrics included the embedded videos and questionnaires to measure participants' reactions. A feature within Qualtrics randomly assigned each participant to one of the six treatment conditions. Participants reviewed the respective video to which she or he had been randomly assigned and then completed

the questionnaire. Table 11 presents all events from the perspective of the research participant.

Table 11. Research procedure

Step	Event
1	Received email invitation to participate in the study
2	Clicked the link embedded in the email invitation, transferring the signal to the Qualtrics questionnaire
3	Read the study introduction and indicated whether she or he wished to continue
4	Watched the video to which she or he was randomly assigned
5	Continued to use Qualtrics to complete the response measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening questions • Monetary value of the lodging experience • Intention to recommend • Manipulation check (theming and service quality) • Time value of the lodging experience • Emotional value of the lodging experience • Escape value of the lodging experience • Memorability • Sex • Age • Race • Household income • Education • Employment status • Marital status
6	Received a notice thanking them for their contribution to the study

II.6 Threats to Internal and External Validity

It is important to identify and control factors that threaten the internal and external validities of this study. “Internal validity is the extent to which a research design includes enough control of the conditions and experiences of participants that it can demonstrate a single unambiguous explanation for a manipulation—that is, cause and

effect. External validity is the extent to which observations made in a study generalize beyond the specific manipulations or constraints in the study” (Privitera, 2014, p. 162). Privitera (2014) explained that several factors threaten the internal validity of a research study. He listed common threats to internal validity: history and maturation, regression and testing effects, instrumentation and measurement, heterogeneous attrition, and environmental factors. Factors that may threaten the internal validity of this study are described in Table 12.

Table 12. Threats to the internal validity of this study

Threat	Description	For this study
History	An unanticipated event co-occurs with a treatment or manipulation in a study	Controlled – Experiment was conducted in only a few minutes, and occasions were random; chosen by participants
Maturation	A participant’s physiological or psychological state changes over time during a study	Controlled – Experiment was conducted for only few minutes
Regression	A change or shift in a participant’s performance toward a level or score that is closer to or more typical of his or her true potential or mean ability on some measure, after previously scoring unusually high or low on the same measure	Controlled – No selection of participants based on a pre-test
Testing	The improved performance on a test or measure the second time it is taken due to the experience of taking the test	Controlled – No pre-test was conducted
Instrumentation	The measurement of the dependent variable changes due to an error during the course of a research study	Controlled – Dependent Variable measured with the same instrument. Reliability and validity evidence exist
Attrition	A participant does not show up for a study at a scheduled time or fails to complete the study	Not controlled, only approximately 3% of the individuals who received the link in their email chose to participate in the study

Table 12. Continued

Threat	Description	For this study
Environmental Factors	Environmental factors threaten internal validity when they vary systematically with the levels of an independent variable	Not controlled, but, because each respondent chose when she or he completed the video, it is reasonable to assume that no systematic environmental effect occurred

Source: Privitera, G. J. (2014). Research methods for the behavioral sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

External validity is the extent to which results of a study can be generalized to populations, contexts, and settings. Four types of external validity can be considered (Privitera, 2014): population validity, ecological validity, temporal validity and outcome validity. These external validities are threatened by sampling and participant characteristics, homogeneous attrition, research settings, timing of measurements, and the operationalization of constructs. Threats to the external validity of this study are listed in Table 13.

Table 13. Threats to the external validity of this study

External Validity	Description	Threat	For this study
Population	The extent to which results observed in a study will generalize to the target population	Sampling methods and participant characteristics	Results may be generalized to the population of former students at Texas A&M University
Ecological	The extent to which results observed in a study will generalize across settings or environments	Research settings	Not controlled; but evidence that simulations may generalize is provided in the literature review.

Table 13. Continued

External Validity	Description	Threat	For this study
Temporal	The extent to which results observed in a study will generalize across time and at different points in time	Timing of measurements	Controlled – The observations in this study are stable, constant, or steady over time
Outcome	The extent to which results observed in a study will generalize across different but related dependent variables	Operationalization of constructs	It may be possible to generalize results to related outcomes. Delight, for example, increases with surprise-value added elements, and service quality increases satisfaction.

Source: Privitera, G. J. (2014). Research methods for the behavioral sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

II.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics were calculated to evaluate the distributions of the measures of values and potential long-term impacts of lodging experience. Means and standard deviations were calculated as measures of central tendency. Shape was evaluated through calculation of skewness and kurtosis, and by visual examination of plots.

Manipulation checks were conducted for both variables. For theme (present vs absent), a crosstabulation table was constructed. The presence or absence of theme were rows in the crosstabulation table, and the columns were responses to the question (*“We have several versions of the video you watched. In some versions, a hotel employee described the history of the hotel to the guest. Do you recall whether an employee described the history of the hotel in the video you viewed?”*; Yes, an employee described the history of the hotel; No, an employee did not describe the history of hotel; I do not recall whether or not an employee described the history of the hotel). Manipulation of

the service quality factor was checked through analysis of variance. A five-item service quality scale was created (alpha reliability .98), and variation in those scores across the three levels of service quality (poor, moderate, excellent) was evaluated.

Hypotheses were tested through multivariate analysis of variance and canonical correlation analysis. MANOVA was used to test the effect of service quality and theme on the measures of value (hypotheses 1 to 3). Canonical correlation analysis was used to examine the relation between the set of values and the set of potential long-term impacts (proclivity to recommend and memorability, hypothesis 4).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

This chapter presents results of data analysis. It is divided into three sections. The first is a summary of key descriptive statistics; the central tendency, dispersion, and shape of the distributions of the measures of subjective lodging experience. The alpha reliability estimate for multiple-item scales is also reported. The second section provides results of the MANOVA, evaluating the individual and joint effects of service quality and theming on monetary, time, emotional, and escape value of lodging experiences (hypotheses 1 to 3). The final section describes the results of the canonical correlation analysis, relating the lodging experience values to potential long-term effects: proclivity to recommend and memorability (hypothesis 4).

III.1 Descriptive Statistics

Except for monetary value, all values of lodging experience were measured by using a 100-point electronic, “slider” scale. Monetary value was measured by using a 1000-point electronic, “slider” scale. The range of the responses was from 0 (minimum response) to 801 (maximum response). Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 14.

Table 14. Descriptive statistics for each variable

Variable (Construct)	N ^a	Range	M	SD	CV	Skew	Kurtosis
Intention to Recommend	453	100	42.85	37.99	1.13	0.17	-1.56
Memorability	453	100	35.72	35.58	1.00	0.52	-1.26
Emotional Value	453	100	39.19	36.51	1.07	0.37	-1.38
Monetary Value	414	801	201.94	137.32	1.47	0.73	0.60
Time Value	452	100	41.22	35.88	1.15	0.30	-1.39
Escape Value	451	100	32.59	31.13	1.05	0.66	-0.82

Note. a: participants, 0-100 scale used for all measurement scales except for monetary value (0-1000)

The means of all constructs measured by a 0-100 scale were less than 50, the mid-point of the scale. In terms of monetary value, the mean was \$201.94 which was much less than the reference price participants were given as a typical price for a hotel similar to the hotel portrayed in the videos (\$400). Distributions were not substantially skewed; all skewness values were less than unity. Kurtosis was negative for five of the six distributions. Those distributions are flatter than the normal curve (platykurtic).

Table 15 provides Pearson correlation coefficients and Cronbach's α (in the principal diagonal) of each variable. All dependent variables are highly intercorrelated. Coefficients ranged from .64 (monetary value and escapism) to .95 (emotional value and time value). Five of the 15 coefficients (33%) were .90 or higher. Reliability estimates for all multiple item scales were greater than 0.90.

Table 15. Correlations

Variable (Construct)	A	B	C	D	E	F
A Proclivity to Recommend	—					
B Memorability	0.88	0.97				
C Emotional Value	0.90	0.93	0.99			
D Monetary Value	0.75	0.71	0.72	—		
E Time Value	0.93	0.92	0.95	0.73	0.97	
F Escape Value	0.71	0.81	0.75	0.64	0.81	0.92

Note. The diagonal values indicate scale reliability. “—” indicates a single-item scale.

III.2 Results of Manipulation Check

To verify whether participants noticed the manipulation of theming and service quality, manipulation checks were conducted. Regarding theming, a chi-square test was performed. The result indicated that theming was effectively manipulated (Table 16). Specifically, 66% of participants who watched themed videos responded that they could recall that an employee described the history of the hotel, while 85% of participants who watched no themed videos reported that they could recall that an employee did not describe the history of the hotel.

Table 16. Result of manipulation check for theming

Response	Theme Treatment		
	No	Yes	Total
Yes, an employee described the history of the hotel	21 (8.5%)	136 (65.7%)	157 (34.7%)
No, an employee did not describe the history of the hotel	209 (85.0%)	46 (22.2%)	255 (56.3%)
I do not recall whether or not an employee described the history of the hotel	16 (6.5%)	25 (12.1%)	41 (9.1%)
Total	246	207	453

Note. $\chi^2 (2, N = 453) = 188.443, p < .001$. Cramer's $v = .645, p < .001$.

In terms of service quality, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to test for the presence of a linear trend across the three categories of service quality, i.e., poor, moderate, and excellent. A five-item service quality scale was created (alpha reliability= .98), and variation in those scores across these three levels of service quality (poor, moderate, excellent) was evaluated (Table 17). The linear trend was found to be significant ($t_{450}=53.29$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.86$). Means of each level of service quality also indicate that service quality was successfully manipulated. The means increase linearly from poor (4.81) to moderate (55.80) to excellent (96.89) (Figure 4). Thus, all sources of evidence indicate manipulation of service quality was effective.

Table 17. Service quality manipulation check: Linear trend analysis

	SS	MS	Value of Contrast	Std. Error	t	df	Sig.
Linear Trend	60,4004.16	60,4004.16	92.08	1.73	53.29	450	<.001
Within	98,886.89	212.69					
Total	702,891.05						

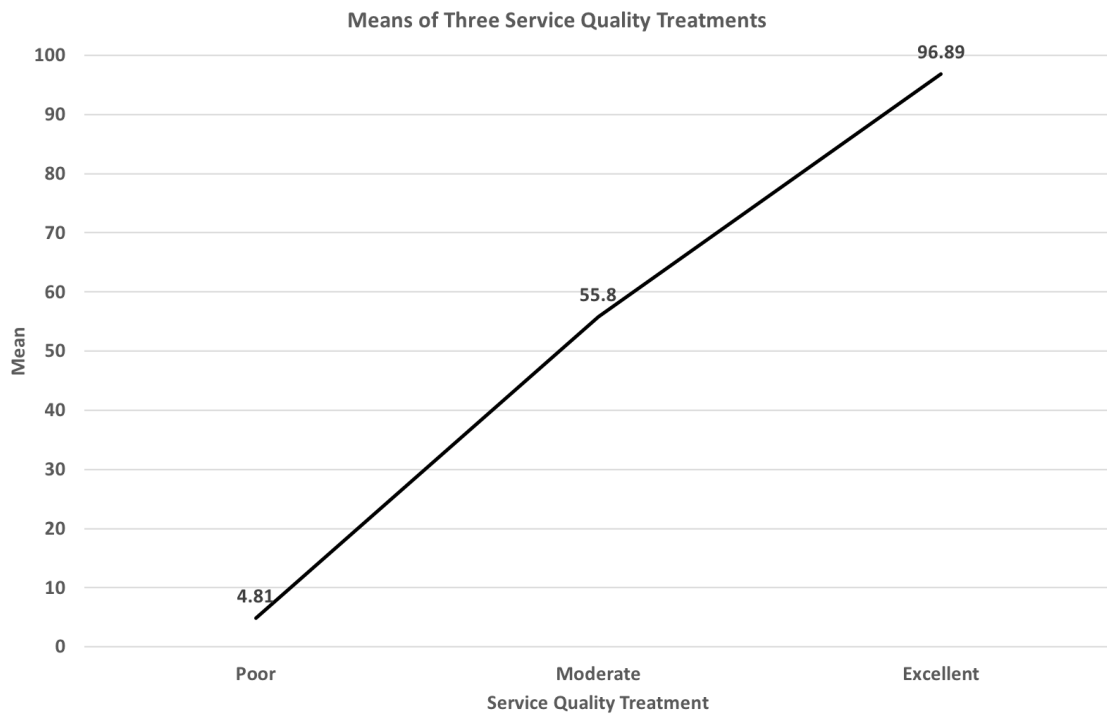


Figure 4 Mean of Three Service Quality Treatments

III.3 Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

Marginal and cell means defined by crossing of service quality (poor, moderate, excellent) and theme (absent, present) are presented in Table 18. Means for the two potential long-term impacts variables are also included in the table, for readers' possible interest, but these are not part of the MANOVA model. The marginal means for service quality consistently increased from poor to excellent for all four subjective lodging experience value variables. For theme, the means of five of the six variables were highest when theme was present. The exception was emotional value. The mean for theme, absent was 36.39, as compared to 33.76 when theme was present. Monetary

value is reported in tangible units (dollars), and the contrast between marginal means is thus directly interpretable. Theme-present yielded a fair price estimate \$13.95 higher than theme-absent (\$209.45-\$195.50). Monetary value differences for service quality were even more dramatic: excellent, \$352.09; moderate, 214.13; poor, \$80.04.

Comments on select cell means are also appropriate. For monetary value, when service quality is excellent, the theme-absent condition yielded a higher fair price than the theme-present condition (\$353.30 vs. \$350.61). The same pattern existed for the measures of time value, emotional value, and memorability. For proclivity to recommend, when service quality was excellent, the means of the theme-present and theme-absent condition were identical (84.80).

MANOVA results are presented in Table 19. The interaction of theme and service quality was significant ($F_{8,804}=2.816, p=.004; \eta_p^2=.027$). Means were plotted to facilitate interpretation (Figure 5). For poor service quality, the mean of the theme-present treatment condition was higher than the mean of the theme-absent treatment condition for all four measures of value. When service quality was excellent, the means in the theme-absent condition were slightly higher for time value, emotional value, and monetary value. For monetary value, the difference was \$2.69 (i.e., \$353.30-\$350.61). For escape value, the mean of escape value was higher under the theme-present condition for all three levels of service quality.

Table 18. Descriptive statistics for each scenario

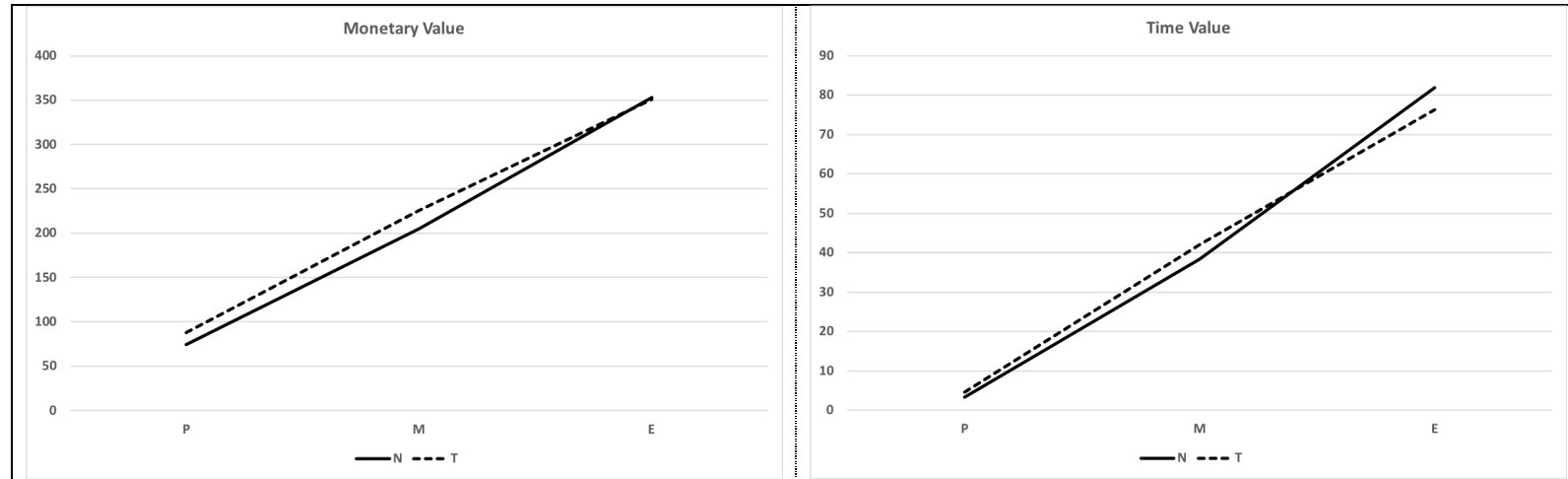
	Mean (SD)					Cell Mean (SD)					
	Theme		Service Quality			NP	NM	NE	YP	YM	YE
	N	Y	P	M	E	“0, 0”	“0, 1”	“0, 2”	“1, 0”	“1, 1”	“1, 2”
N=411	228	183	143	166	102	80	92	56	63	74	46
Monetary Value	195.50 (132.47)	209.45 (143.24)	80.04 (86.58)	214.13 (82.71)	352.09 (104.14)	74.09 (10.04)	205.02 (9.36)	353.30 (12.00)	87.59 (11.31)	225.46 (10.44)	350.61 (13.24)
Time Value	36.74 (34.43)	37.71 (34.73)	3.85 (7.66)	39.98 (23.08)	79.32 (22.51)	3.28 (2.12)	38.40 (1.98)	81.83 (2.54)	4.58 (2.39)	41.94 (2.21)	76.26 (2.80)
Emotional Value	36.39 (35.99)	33.76 (34.23)	2.44 (5.26)	37.42 (25.46)	77.62 (24.20)	1.87 (2.27)	38.25 (2.12)	82.67 (2.71)	3.16 (2.56)	36.38 (2.36)	71.47 (2.99)
Escape Value	21.92 (26.05)	40.76 (31.76)	9.32 (15.19)	31.19 (25.80)	58.29 (29.53)	3.72 (2.44)	20.70 (2.28)	49.92 (2.92)	16.44 (2.75)	44.23 (2.54)	68.49 (3.22)
Intention to Recommend	36.69 (36.80)	40.91 (36.85)	2.52 (8.02)	41.21 (23.32)	84.80 (18.97)	1.96 (2.14)	37.61 (2.00)	84.80 (2.56)	3.24 (2.41)	45.69 (2.23)	84.80 (2.82)
Memorability	28.98 (32.96)	34.93 (35.09)	2.62 (6.17)	31.18 (25.42)	73.02 (25.78)	1.72 (2.31)	25.54 (2.15)	73.57 (2.76)	3.77 (2.60)	38.20 (2.40)	72.36 (3.04)

Note. N: No theme, Y: Themed, P: Poor, M: Moderate, E: Excellent

Table 19. MANOVA: Monetary, time, emotional, and escape value by service quality and theme

Effect	Wilk's λ	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	p	η_p^2	Observed Power
Intercept	0.112	794.518	4	402	<.001	0.888	1
Theme (T)	0.732	36.724	4	402	<.001	0.268	1
Service Quality (S)	0.251	99.998	8	804	<.001	0.499	1
T by S	0.946	2.816	8	804	0.004	0.027	0.946

Figure 5 shows means of each construct under six conditions.



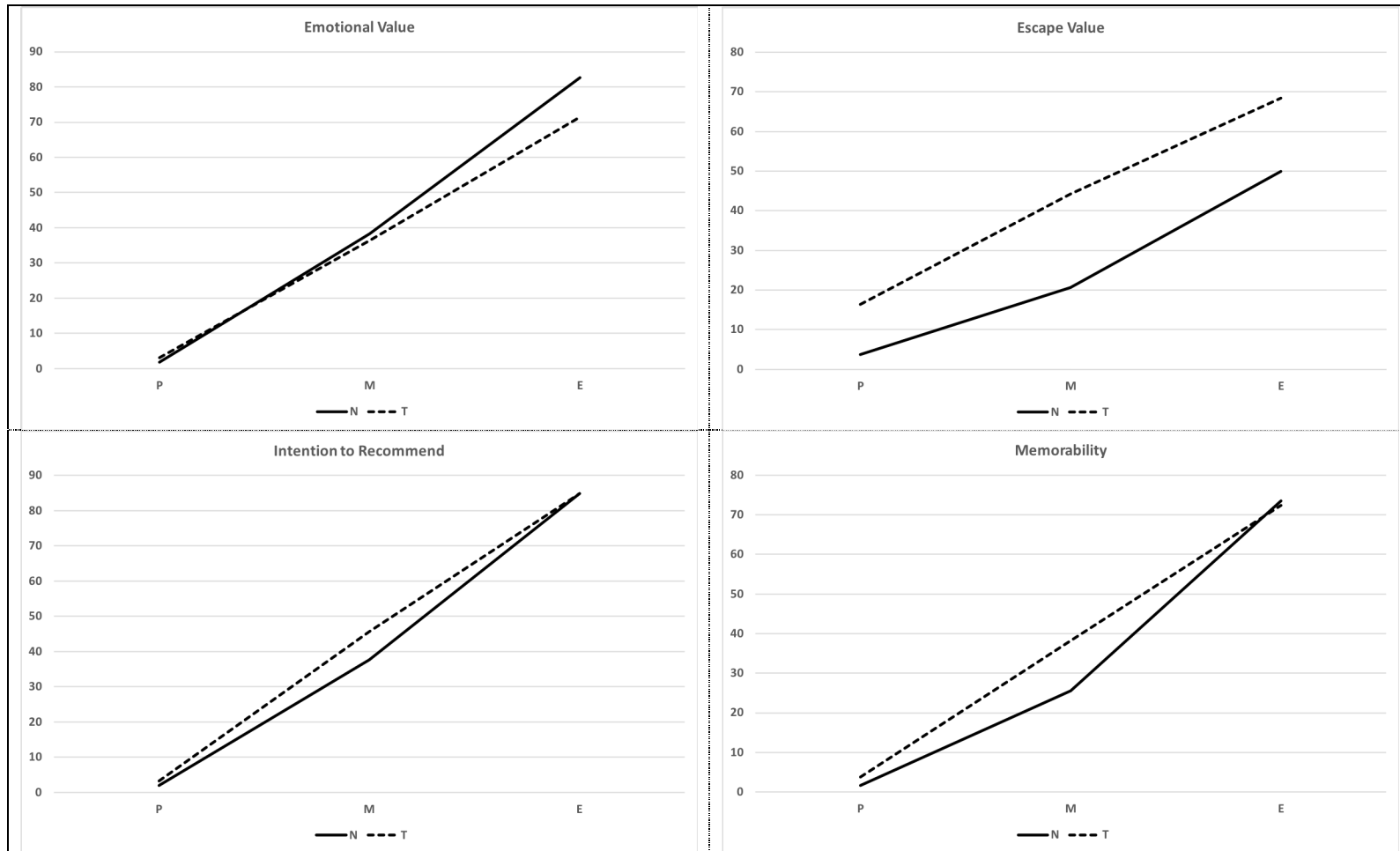


Figure 5 Service Quality by Theme for each dimension of experience value

Because the interaction effect of theming and service quality was found to be significant, simple effects tests were conducted. Table 20 shows the tests of simple effects of service quality per both of the two conditions of theme (i.e., absent and present). These effects were significant across all dependent variables.

Table 21 shows the results of the simple effects of theme per each level of service quality (i.e., poor, moderate, excellent). For emotional value, the effect of theme within excellent service quality was significant. For escape value, the effect of theme within all three levels of service quality were significant.

Finally, it is notable that the effect of service quality was significant ($\lambda = .251$, $F_{8,804} = 99.998$, $p < .001$). Differences in means of all four measures of lodging experience value were dramatic (Table 18). For monetary value, for example, participants reported \$80.04 as the monetary value for a poor service quality experience, compared to \$353.09 for an excellent service quality experience. Likewise, the mean for time value was 3.85 on the 100-point scale for a poor service quality experience and 79.32 for an excellent service quality experience. The mean for escape value when service quality was excellent was over six times higher than when service quality was poor (9.32 vs. 58.29). Clearly, service quality has a substantial impact on subjective lodging experience values.

Table 20. Effect of service quality for theme absent and theme present

	Service Quality Means			SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	η_p^2
	Poor	Moderate	Excellent						
Monetary Value									
Theme Absent	74.09	205.02	353.30	2630700.49	2	1315350.25	163.132	<.001***	.800
Theme Present	87.59	225.46	350.61	1849023.27	2	924511.636	114.66	<.001***	.562
Error				3289740.2	408	8063.089			
Time Value									
Theme Absent	3.28	38.40	81.83	26822.697	2	118411.349	325.654	<.001***	.165
Theme Present	4.58	41.94	76.26	180564.924	2	90282.462	248.294	<.001***	1.113
Error				162170.369	446	363.61			
Emotional Value									
Theme Absent	1.87	38.25	82.67	250741.485	2	125370.743	300.576	<.001***	1.345
Theme Present	3.16	36.38	71.47	165244.385	2	82622.193	198.087	<.001***	.886
Error				186444.304	447	417.101			
Escape Value									
Theme Absent	3.72	20.70	49.92	76804.089	2	38402.044	76.607	<.001***	.344
Theme Present	16.44	44.23	68.49	88897.998	2	44448.999	88.67	<.001***	.399
Error				223071.073	445	501.283			

Table 21. Effect of theme per level of service quality

	Theme Means		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	η_p^2
	Absent	Present						
Monetary Value								
Poor Service Quality	74.09	87.59	6178.921	1	6178.921	.766	.382	.002
Moderate Service Quality	205.02	225.46	17130.749	1	17130.749	2.125	.146	.005
Excellent Service Quality	353.30	350.61	1162.762	1	1162.762	.144	.704	.000
Error			3289740.2	408	8063.089			
Time Value								
Poor Service Quality	3.28	4.58	59.589	1	118411.349	.164	.686	.000
Moderate Service Quality	38.40	41.94	568.814	1	568.814	1.564	.212	.004
Excellent Service Quality	81.83	76.26	341.721	1	341.721	.94	.333	.002
Error			162170.369	446	363.61			
Emotional Value								
Poor Service Quality	1.87	3.16	60.688	1	60.688	.146	.703	.000
Moderate Service Quality	38.25	36.38	63.939	1	63.939	.153	.696	.000
Excellent Service Quality	82.67	71.47	2530.221	1	2530.221	6.066	.014*	.014
Error			186444.304	447	417.101			
Escape Value								
Poor Service Quality	3.72	16.44	5740.241	1	5740.241	11.451	.001***	.026
Moderate Service Quality	20.70	44.23	23306.032	1	23306.032	46.493	<.001***	.104
Excellent Service Quality	49.92	68.49	14474.781	1	14474.781	28.875	<.001***	.065
Error			223071.073	445	501.283			

In summary, research hypotheses (H₁ to H₃) were supported. MANOVA and simple effects test results indicate a significant interaction effect between theming and service quality. The effect of theming within excellent service quality on emotional value was significant and the effect of theming within all three levels of service quality on escape value were significant. The second and third hypotheses proposed significant main effects for theming. Although investigators generally do not interpret main effects when interaction effect are significant, examining main effects can be important if the effect sizes of main effects are much larger than the effect size of the interaction effect (Howell, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The effect size of the theming main effect is significantly larger than that of the interaction effect. The value of η_p^2 for theme is .27, while the value of η_p^2 for the theme-by-service quality interaction is only .03. Therefore, the main effects of both theming and service quality were interpreted. For theming, a significant main effect was found for escape value only, $F_{1,405} = 68.093, p < .001$. Escape value was higher in the theme-present condition ($M = 43.051, SD = 1.65$) than the theme-absent condition ($M = 24.778, SD = 1.48$). Consequently, it was concluded that hypothesis 2 was supported, but for escape value only. The main effect of service quality was also significant ($F_{8,804}=99.998, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.499$). Subjective value of lodging experience increased with improvements in service quality.

III.4 Canonical Correlation Analysis

Canonical correlation analysis (CCA) was conducted to test the relations between the four measures of lodging experience value and the two measures of long term impacts. The analysis revealed a very strong relation between the these two sets.

Both pairs of canonical functions explained significant portions of the total variance. Their squared canonical correlations (r_c^2) were .934 and .181. Wilks's lambda for the first canonical function was $\lambda = .05$ ($F_{8,810} = 335.21, p < .001$). The first function accounted for 98.475% of the shared variance between the two sets (see Tables 22 and 23). The second function (2 of 2) was also statistically significant ($\lambda = .82, F_{3,406} = 29.81, p < .001$), but explained only 1.524% of the shared variance.

A structure matrix of correlations between the measured variables and their respective canonical functions is presented in Table 24. Relations of the measured variables with the first set of canonical functions were very strong. All coefficients in the predictor set exceeded .77 in absolute value, and the absolute value of the structure coefficients in the corresponding set of criterion variables were .95 or higher. The presence of consistently negative signs in both sets of structure coefficients indicates a positive relation between variables in the two sets. As the measures of value increase, so do the measures of memorability and intention to recommend. Hypothesis 4 of this study was supported.

Table 22. Canonical functions

Root No.	Eigenvalue	Pct Var.	Cum. %	Can. r	Can. r^2
1	14.223	98.475	98.475	.967	.934
2	.22	1.524	100	.425	.181

Table 23. Dimension reduction analysis for canonical functions

Roots	Wilks λ	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
1 to 2	.05	335.21	8	810	<.001
2 to 2	.82	29.81	3	406	<.001

Table 24. Structure matrix of canonical functions

	Structure Matrix		Standardized Canonical Coefficients	
	1	2	1	2
Predictors				
Monetary Value	-.778	.299	-.070	.731
Time Value	-.981	.143	-.468	1.883
Emotional Value	-.974	-.061	-.354	-1.570
Escape Value	-.824	-.387	-.172	-1.077
% var explained	79.86	6.582	–	–
Criterion Var.				
Memorability	-.978	-.209	-.601	-1.973
Intention to Recommend	-.957	.291	-.431	2.017
% var explained	87.427	1.16	–	–

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the research, a discussion of limitations, and integration with existing literature. Overall, the goal of the study was achieved. A new model linking values of lodging experiences to potential long-term impacts was proposed and tested. Results also supported hypotheses about determinants of values of lodging experiences. Detailed discussion follows.

IV.1 Summary

Previous studies provided theoretical and empirical evidence regarding the significant effect of service quality on customer's perceived value and post-purchase behavior (e.g., Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988; Petrick, 2004; Raza, Siddiquei, Awan, & Bukhari, 2012; Zeithaml, 1988). Applying the Kano model (Kano et al., 1984) and experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 2011) to the lodging industry context, providing the excellent quality of service may not be enough to result in highly valued lodging experiences. This is because that it is essential to manage appropriately three dimensions of service experience (i.e., dissatisfiers, satisfiers, and delighters) and excellent service quality might not be utilized as a delighter. As Pine and Gilmore suggested, thus, experience economy strategies can be employed as delighters (especially theming in this study), thereby increasing the values of lodging experiences, producing memorable lodging experiences, and affecting positively guest's intention to recommend. With this in mind, the purposes of this study were 1) to investigate the main effects of theming and

service quality on values of lodging experiences, 2) to examine the interaction effect between theming and service quality on values of lodging experiences, and 3) to verify whether values of lodging experiences have a positive effect on potential long-term impacts.

MANOVA and CCA were conducted to achieve the purposes of this study. Results of MANOVA showed that there were not only the significant main effects of theming and service quality on the values of lodging experiences (Theming $F_{4,402} = 36.724, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .268$; Service quality $F_{8,804} = 99.998, p < .001; \eta_p^2 = .499$) but also the significant interaction effect between theming and service quality ($F_{8,804} = 2.816, p = .004; \eta_p^2 = .027$). These results supported fully or partially research hypotheses (H₁ to H₃). CCA result revealed an extremely strong relationship between the four values of lodging experience (i.e., monetary, time, emotional, and escape values) and the two potential long-term impacts (intention to recommend and memorability) (Wilk's $\lambda = .05, F_{8,810} = 335.21, p < .001$). Therefore, it could be assumed that potential long-term impacts increase as values of lodging experience increase (i.e., H₄ is supported).

IV.2 Integration with Previous Results

The main offerings of the hospitality and tourism industries are services. Unlike commodities and goods, services have different characteristics (i.e., intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability) separating services from tangible goods (Richard & Allaway, 1993; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1985). Thus, many studies

on service have conducted to explore the components of service offerings and investigate how to increase customers' perceived values and satisfaction based on the different perspectives from general goods. In terms of exploring and categorizing service components, the Kano model proposed by Dr. Kano and his colleagues in 1984 is one of the representative methods. Dr. Kano assumed the non-linear relationship between service performance and customer satisfaction and included more components (i.e., attractive and must-be) (Shahin, Pourhamidi, Antony, & Park, 2013). Based on the Kano model, there are five components: attractive, one-dimensional, must-be, indifferent, and reverse. To investigate the effects of service components, it could be possible to employ attractive, one-dimensional, and must-be components because the indifferent component does not have any effects on the relationship between service performance and customer satisfaction and the reverse component can be regarded as the component opposing to the one-dimensional component. Thus, satisfiers (one-dimensional components), dissatisfiers (must-be components), and delighters (attractive components) were only employed to establish the conceptual model of this study.

Many studies have been conducted using the Kano model. Based on how well service components could satisfy customer's needs, the components of service are classified (Lin, Yeh, & Wang, 2015) and previous research using the Kano model has mainly focused on categorizing service components. However, there are no studies on the effects of each component on the customer's perceived values and satisfaction by using the categorized components of service. In this respect, the proposed model of this

study was conceptualized by employing three components (i.e., dissatisfiers, satisfiers, and delighters).

Aside from understanding the components of services, it is essential to investigate the way to increase the quality of services because service quality is highly correlated with customer satisfaction (Brown & Swartz, 1989). Providing excellent quality of service leads to consumer satisfaction, which promotes positive post-purchase behaviors and intentions (Lee et al., 2018; Mandanoglu, 2006; Martinelli & Balboni, 2012; Parasuraman et al., 1988). However, different characteristics of service from tangible goods posed vexing problems for service marketers (Zeithaml et al., 1985) and many scholars attempted to develop measurement scales for service quality.

One of the seminal studies on service quality is SERVQUAL developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988). Parasuraman and his colleagues asserted that the measurement scale for service quality should be developed due to the different service features. After SERVQUAL was developed, many scholars have applied SERVQUAL in the hospitality and tourism contexts (e.g., Bojanic & Rose, 1994; Getty & Thompson, 1994; Saleh & Ryan, 1991) and modified SERVQUAL for the specific situations in the field of hospitality and tourism. According to recent research (Lai et al., 2018), over one hundred measurement scales for service quality have been developed in different hospitality and tourism fields within the last thirty years. In the lodging industry context, several measurement scales were also developed such as LODGSERV (Knutson et al., 1991), LODGQUAL (Getty & Thompson, 1995), HOLSERV (Mei et al., 1999), and

lodging quality index (LQI, Getty & Getty, 2003) were developed to measure lodging service quality.

However, these developed scales might not include all service attributes to be measured because these measurement scales were developed by focus mainly on the dimensions of SERVQUAL. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt the tools used in the real world such as the “star rating system” developed by Forbes Travel Guide and the “diamond rating system” developed by AAA. Star and diamond rating systems include more detailed service items affecting guest’s perceived values and satisfaction. In addition to this, service quality should be measured by considering the fact that lodging services are providing across several service encounters because important service attributes are different among each service encounter. Therefore, the tools used in the lodging industry were referred and guest lodging experience journey map including five service encounters (i.e., arrival, check-in, guest room, dining, and check-out, see Figure 3) was established in this study.

After Pine and Gilmore (1998) proposed the concept of the experience economy, many scholars have paid more attention to service experience than service attributes and qualities. They asserted that service experience is a key factor affecting positively customer behaviors (Cetin & Walls, 2016) and differentiating services (Shaw & Ivens, 2002). Because there is no universally accepted definition of experience, lodging experience in this study was defined as a state of motivation that results from encounters with a lodging service or lodging service provider based on the concept that experience is a subjective response.

In terms of measuring service experience, existing studies regarded the determinants of the quality of service experience as a tool to measure the quality of service experience. For example, in the lodging context, Cetin and Dincer (2013) employed the physical environment and social interaction as two dimensions of experience quality. Thus, based on the definition of lodging experience in this study, functional, rational, affective and emotional perceptions as the subjective responses (Bueno et al., 2019) were referred to measure lodging experience. These subjective responses can be regarded as guests' perceptions of values of lodging experiences and four components of values of lodging experiences were proposed: monetary, time, emotional, and escape values of lodging experience.

Values of lodging experience used in this study were developed based on the dimensions of perceived value. Perceived value has been measured based on a multi-dimensional concept (Petrick, 2002). The dimensions of perceived values include functional and emotional values basically and additional dimensions were added as necessary (e.g., functional, conditional, social, emotional, and epistemic values, Sheth et al., 1991; societal, experiential, functional, and market values, Kantamneni & Coulson, 1996; quality, emotional, price, and social values, Sweeney & Soutar, 2002). In the hospitality and tourism field, Petrick (2002) developed the measurement scale of perceived values including behavioral price, monetary price, emotional response, quality, and reputation as post-experience perceived values. In this study, escape value was included in the construct of values of lodging experience because theming was used as delighters and escape value might be strongly affected by theming. Based on the body

of literature, the construct of values of lodging experience was developed in this study including four values of lodging experience: monetary, time, emotional, and escape values. This construct can be employed to investigate the effects of three dimensions of service experiences on customers' perception of the values of experience not only in the lodging industry but also in the hospitality and tourism industries widely.

Pine and Gilmore (1998, 2011) suggested the experience economy strategies: theme the experience, harmonize impressions with positive cues, eliminate negative cues, mix in memorabilia, engage the five senses. Ellis and Rossman (2008) also asserted that theming, personalized interactions, multisensory appeal, and unanticipated value-added take-aways are can be used to make customers delighted. As the importance of experience economy strategies has been recognized, the themed service encounter is a prominent trend in a wide variety of spheres (Hung et al., 2015). Effective theming is a key factor in creating an irresistible customer impression and differentiating from competitors (Gottdiener, 2001). Åstrøm (2019) emphasized the importance of theming by listing the objectives of theming. He asserted that one of the important roles of theming is to turn a service into an experience effectively and automatically (Åstrøm, 2017). Mossberg (2008) also argued that theming can turn an ordinary experience into an extraordinary experience. Although theming is one of the powerful strategies to evoke positive service experience, it has been overlooked in the hospitality and tourism literature (Åstrøm, 2017). Thus, the main effect of theming was examined in this study and the result supported the assertions in previous studies that theming has a positive and direct effect on values of service experience in the lodging context.

In summary, services consist of five components (i.e., attractive, one-dimensional, must-be, reverse, and indifferent attributes) based on the Kano model. Although isolated effects of these components were not examined in this study, service features of each service encounter were classified as three main components of the Kano model (i.e., satisfiers, dissatisfiers, and delighters) and these three components were employed to conceptualize the experience design construct in the proposed model. With regard to service quality, the results of this study strongly supported the main effect of service quality on customers' perception of values of experience. Theming as an experience economy strategy was investigated to verify the assertions of previous studies (e.g., Åstrøm, 2017, 2019; Gilmore & Pine, 2002; Mossberg, 2008; Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 2011). Based on the result of this study, the main effect of theming on customers' value perception was confirmed. In addition to this, the interaction effect of theming and service quality on values of lodging experience was verified despite the weak effect size. Based on these findings of this study, some limitations of this study will be discussed in the next section.

IV.3 Limitations

It is important to note the limitations of this study. The first of which is that participants in this study were limited to former students at Texas A&M University. As the demographics of participants showed, 86.4% of participants were White / Caucasian, 98.8% have a higher education background and 75.1% of participants got married. The standards or criteria for evaluating the level of service quality have been standardized

globally, and thus demographic characteristics of participants might not have a strong effect on their perceptions of service quality. These biased characteristics, however, may lead to different perceptions and attitudes toward a specific theme because different demographics may mean a different cultural perspective and preference.

Another limitation of this study is using photos with narration only. Using video lead to psychological and behavioral results similar to those found in a real service environment (Bateson & Hui, 1992). A video-based scenario heightens the level of realism and increases external validity (Victorino & Dixon, 2016). Although videos were created by using real photos and narratives, videos filmed by hiring professional actors and using real settings might heighten the level of realism.

The third limitation to be noted is that *jail-theme (history)* was chosen as a theme in this study. Schmitt and Simonson suggested nine categories that can be used as a theme: 1) *history*, 2) *religion*, 3) *fashion*, 4) *politics*, 5) *psychology*, 6) *philosophy*, 7) *the physical world*, 8) *popular culture*, and 9) *the arts*. Based on their categories of a theme, *history* was selected and *jail* was chosen as a sub-category because several jail-themed hotels exist so that the level of realism can be heightened. However, by using only one theme as a stimulus, the effect of types of the theme was not controlled thoroughly. In addition to this, considering the results of data analyses, it could be assumed that jail theme might negatively affect values of lodging experiences and potential long-term impacts.

The final limitation to be highlighted is that this study couldn't consider the main effects of the three dimensions of the Kano model (i.e., dissatisfier, satisfier, and

delighter). Based on the proposed conceptual model (see Figure 1), experience design consists of three factors that affect the values of lodging experience. However, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the individual and joint effects of theming and service quality on values of lodging experience. Without distinguishing the individual effects of three factors, the level of service quality was only manipulated. Based on the limitations of this study, directions for future research will be discussed in the next section.

IV.4 Directions for Future Research

Several directions for future research can be noted based on the limitations of this study. One of the most important directions for future study on lodging experience is that it is necessary to investigate the individual effects of three components of Kano model (i.e., dissatisfiers, satisfiers, and delighters) on lodging experience. The majority of previous studies on customers' perception of values of experience have conducted by employing the concepts of service quality or servicescape. Also, existing studies using the Kano model provided the knowledge mainly about how to categorize service attributes. After categorizing service attributes to three (e.g., satisfier, dissatisfier, delighter) or five dimensions (e.g., attractive, one-dimensional, must-be, reverse, indifferent), it needs to examine the effects of the classified service attributes on customers' perception of values of experience. For example, among service attributes categorized as a satisfier, the degree of the positive effect of a satisfier on value perception might be different from each satisfier. By investigating the isolated effects of

three service attributes, it would make a great contribution to understating service attributes and service quality.

Another direction for future research to be highlighted is the selection of themes. Jail theme was selected as one of the history themes in this study because several jail-themed hotels exist and it may heighten the level of realism. However, it could not be generalized the result of this study by using only one theme. In addition to this, the distinct characteristics of jail-theme might differ from other history themes. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the effect of theming on value perception by employing several different themes. Using several themes together could widen the understanding of the effect of theming more precisely.

Furthermore, the cultural diversity of research participants should be considered in future research on the effect of theming on values of service experience. A majority of participants in this study were White / Caucasian (86.4%) and relatively high educated (75.1%). These demographic characteristics might not be able to encompass diverse cultural perspectives. Considering the effect of themes, however, cultural perspectives of participants should not be overlooked and participants' cultural perspectives are closely related to their demographic characteristics. Because research participants might determine whether theming is attractive, exotic, or unique or not, future research should consider cultural diversity when investigating the effect of theming.

The last suggestion is that it will be possible to obtain more precise outcomes by filming each scenario instead of using real photos with the narrative. Because films provide more vivid vicarious for research participants than videos made by using photos

and narrative, using films will be beneficial not only to heighten the realism level but also to increase external validity. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that future research utilize films as an experimental tool to examine customers' value perception in the context of service experience.

IV.5 Implications for Hospitality Managers

Providing excellent service quality has been recognized as a key factor in the hospitality and tourism industries by not only scholars but also practitioners. However, as the quality of service has been standardized and customers' expectations continue to escalate (Leonard & Sasser, 1982; Lewis & Mitchell, 1990; Takeuchi & Quelch, 1983), it might not be easy for practitioners in the hospitality and tourism industries to make their customers satisfied, delighted, and return by offering only excellent service quality.

Although excellent service quality is a critical factor to provide positive lodging experience for guests as the result of this study showed, practitioners should not overlook that it might be difficult to utilize excellent service quality as a delighter of the Kano model. One of the distinct characteristics of a delighter is unanticipated and surprising offerings. Nowadays, however, guests expect excellent service quality during their stay. Therefore, practitioners should not only provide excellent quality of service for their guests but also find other ways to differentiate their services.

One of the ways to differentiate service experience from competitors is to implement the strategies of experience economy proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998; 2011). Among those strategies, theming can create an irresistible customer impression

(Åstrøm, 2019; Schmitt & Simonson, 1997) and allow hotel service providers to upgrade their offerings from ordinary service to extraordinary experiences (Gilmore & Pine, 2002). Furthermore, theming can play a role in attracting both new customers and repeat purchasers (Åstrøm, 2017; Weaver, 2006, 2011). According to the results of this study, the theming has the individual effect and the interaction effect with service quality on values of lodging experience. That is, practitioners in the lodging industry can utilize theming strategy to differentiate their lodging service and experience from competitors.

In terms of implementing theming strategy, practitioners in the lodging industry should consider carefully the type of theming they will stage. As the results of this study showed, jail-theme was used in this study and the emotional value was negatively affected by theming. Because only one theme (i.e., jail-theme) was used and investigated, it could not be concluded that the negative effect of theming on emotional value resulted from the type of theme. However, using jail-theme was the reason the emotional value of lodging experience when the theming present was lower than theming absent. Therefore, practitioners in the lodging industry should select a theme by considering the demographic characteristics and cultural perspectives of their main customers.

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APPENDIX A: SIX WRITTEN SCENARIOS

Six Written Scenarios

INTRODUCTION

Imagine that you visited “Metropolis,” an imaginary city. Imagine that Metropolis is one of the largest cities in the United States. You stayed three nights in a 5-star hotel in Metropolis: “SS Luxury Hotel.” SS Luxury Hotel is a 5-Star hotel; it provides luxurious accommodations. SS Luxury Hotel staff are proud of their 5-star status. They believe they provide the very best in guest experiences.

Your visit was a vacation! You spent your time in Metropolis doing activities that you enjoy doing, whether those activities involved sporting events, nature experiences in nearby parks and forests, performing arts, shopping, dining, sight-seeing, or simply relaxing in your room. Following is a story of your SS Luxury Hotel experience, from your arrival to departure.

NAME

a valet staff member – Mike
a main entrance staff member - Ann
a front desk agent (check-in) – Courtney
a desk staff member in restaurant – Tina
a server in restaurant – Aiden
a server in bar – Tom
an interpreter – Andy
a room service staff member – Scott
a tray remover – Debbie
a front desk agent (check-out) – Rick

Theme & Excellent Service

ARRIVAL

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. This hotel is unique in that it was once the Metropolis jail. It now carries a “jail history” theme throughout. When you arrived at the main entrance, a valet staff member, “Mike,” enthusiastically greeted you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore uniforms that looked like police officers from the “Roaring 20’s” (1920-1930). A sign explained that the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis was once the most significant jail in that city. It housed the city’s most notorious and famous criminals. Mike unloaded your luggage skillfully and one of his co-workers, Ann, engaged you in friendly conversation as she escorted you to the front desk.

LOBBY

While heading to the front desk, Ann briefly explained the history of the hotel. “In the past,” she pointed out, “this hotel was Metropolis’ largest jail. It housed some of Metropolis’s most notorious criminals. So, our hotel looks like a jail inside and out. It preserves the historical feel of the original jail.”

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

A logo of the SS Luxury Hotel was visibly displayed on the wall behind the front desk. You noticed that the logo read, “Your history adventure awaits!” Two people were checking in. Although you were willing to wait your turn, a front desk agent who had been diligently

working on another task immediately turned her attention to you. Her nametag read, "Courtney." Courtney was also dressed in classic police uniform. "Good afternoon!" she said, "I am Courtney, how may I help you?" After this warm greeting, she offered you a glass of champagne. She quickly found your reservation and gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with historical photographs and brief history of the hotel. You found the service to be very reliable, prompt, and friendly!

HALLWAY

Using the clear instructions Courtney provided, you easily found the elevator to take you to your room. Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that they could get in the elevator in less than one minute. "Wanted-Dead or Alive" posters were displayed, one on each of the three walls of the elevator. Each poster portrayed a notorious criminal of the past. The hallway looked very clean and very quiet. It reminded you of an empty jail cell. You noticed that the hallway preserved its architectural history: it looked like a jail! Signs, with black and white stripes like an inmate's clothing clearly directed you to your room.

GUESTROOM

You entered your room. The first thing you noticed was that 'Solitary' was printed on your privacy door hanger, instead of 'Do not disturb.' Then, you noticed the pleasing aroma of a blend of white tea with wood cedar and vanilla. All furniture and items were well-organized. The carpet was very clean and plush. Your room temperature was perfect; neither too cold nor too hot. Your room was large and well-proportioned, with a comfortable seating area. The furniture was top-quality and seating was very comfortable, including arrangements for television viewing. Walls were decorative and communicated the jail history theme. Fully enclosed clothes-hanging space with more than ten wood removable matching hangers were provided. Storage space was more than enough for your two pieces of luggage.

BEDDING

The quality of bed linens was outstanding. Your bed was a top-quality foam mattress like those other luxury hotels use. Sheets were triple sheeting and well fitted. Your pillow collection included both down (feathers) and foam options. The comforter on your bed included the image of a Roaring 20's police car. A photograph of Supreme court Justices hung over your bed. The wall and night tables next to the bed were very clean. Your room was very quiet. You could not hear anything from outside of your room.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. Your bathroom was elegant! It had a unique style, with luxurious fixtures and artistic and historic elements. Of course, it was very clean. The bathroom was also spacious. It allowed you generous ease of movement, comfort, and relaxation. Large framed mirrors and top-quality marble shower walls were highlighted. You enjoyed the aroma of lemon and lime blossom notes. Your water pressure was appropriate to take a pleasant shower. It took only a couple of seconds for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

The guest lounge on your floor was themed as a prison's library.

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. The restaurant name was “Clink.” It looked like several cells in a jail. When you arrived, a desk staff member, Tina, greeted you with a smile. She informed you that you would be served in about five minutes. She escorted you to a comfortable waiting area and handed you a drink and a menu. Your menu included an impressive variety of food and beverages. You noticed that the food prices were very reasonable. After five minutes, a server, Aiden, escorted you to your seat. Your food arrived. It was delicious! It was well seasoned and it exceeded your expectations.

DINING - BAR

After enjoying your dinner, you went to the hotel bar. Several posters with images of criminals were hanging on the wall. All drinks were named after notorious criminals. Your drinks were delivered with the pamphlet giving a brief history about the criminal namesake of your drink.

EVENT (THEME)

Your hotel provided a standing exhibit about its history in a large room near its meeting rooms. On your way to the exhibit, you took some memorable pictures next to the posters of notorious criminals. At the exhibit, an interpreter who was dressed like a prison officer (Andy) described the room where more than 400 drunk and disorderly celebrities were kept while they were sobered-up. A variety of items were on display, including guns, shackles, handcuffs, knives, antique locks and keys, and brass knuckles. Andy suggested that you might like to visit the hotel’s recreated cell, where you could experience the reality of a cell. As you left the exhibit, Andy thanked you for visiting. You noticed a gift shop conveniently located in the next room.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. The menu options were extensive. Your breakfast was delivered within five minutes of time promised, and your host, Scott, surprised you with a morning newspaper. Your food was served at the proper temperature and Scott provided instructions for the tray removal. All dishware and linens were of an upscale quality and looked like brand-new. Throughout the delivery process, Scott used your name. He showed a sincere desire to satisfy all of your requests. After having your breakfast, you called to request that the dishes be removed. Within a few minutes, a staff member, Debbie, removed your dishes, with a warm and sincere smile.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. Express check-out services were available 24 hours/seven days a week. You went to the front desk to check out. Several front desk agents were serving guests. You waited less than three minutes. Upon check out, the front desk agent, Rick, asked you about your stay and explained an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee). He confirmed your payment method and provided a copy of the bill for you to review. Rick expressed a warm and sincere thank-you for staying at the hotel and he sincerely invited you to return. With a warm escort by Ann, you arrived at the exit. The valet, Mike, had your car waiting. He checked all of your belongings and placed them in your car. You headed for the airport.

Theme & Moderate Service

ARRIVAL

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. This hotel is unique in that it was once the Metropolis jail. It now carries a “jail history” theme throughout. Although you arrived at the main entrance, no doorman or valet was immediately present to help you. The valet station had been abandoned. After about 30 seconds, a valet staff member, “Mike,” came to the entrance, apologized, and started to help you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore uniforms that looked like police officers from the “Roaring 20’s” (1920-1930). As you entered the hotel, a staff member, Ann, enthusiastically greeted you. “Welcome to the SS Luxury Hotel!” she exclaimed. A sign explained that the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis was once the most significant jail in that city. It housed the city’s most notorious and famous criminals. Ann led you to a place where you could easily see where to check-in. She wished you a memorable visit and returned to her workstation.

LOBBY

While heading to the front desk, you noticed that the lobby had distinct features.

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

A logo of the SS Luxury Hotel was visibly displayed on the wall behind the front desk. You noticed that the logo read, “Your history adventure awaits!” Two people were checking in. You waited patiently for 2 minutes. The front desk agent’s nametag read, “Courtney,” and she acknowledged you. Courtney was dressed in a classic police uniform. “Good afternoon!” she said, “I am Courtney, how may I help you?” After she found your reservation, she said “I am very sorry that your room is not ready. We will finish our preparations and give you a call immediately when your room is ready.” She suggested a comfortable place for you to wait, and she provided you with a free drink from the bar for your trouble. After five minutes, she walked to where you were sitting, apologized again, and gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with historical photographs and brief history of the hotel.

HALLWAY

You boarded the elevator to your room. “Wanted-Dead or Alive” posters were displayed, one on each of the three walls of the elevator. Each poster portrayed a notorious criminal of the past. The hallway was neat and clean, but you did notice one room in front of which service dishes had been left in the hallway. The hallway looked very quiet. It reminded you of an empty jail cell. You noticed that the hallway preserved its architectural history: it looked like a jail! Signs, with black and white stripes like an inmate’s clothing directed you to your room.

GUESTROOM

You arrived at your room, but your keys did not work. You had to go down to the front desk. You received new keys and came back to your room. The first thing you noticed was that ‘Solitary’ was printed on your privacy door hanger, instead of ‘Do not disturb.’ Then, noticed a pleasing scent greeting you as you entered. You found your room to be neat and clean. Your room was very comfortable. It included a nice couch, matching chairs, and a comfortable ottoman. Walls were decorative and communicated the jail history theme. Your luggage would not fit into the small closet, so you had to leave it in a corner of your room.

BEDDING

A corner of the bedsheet had a small hole in it. Otherwise, you found your bed to be very comfortable. The comforter on your bed included the image of a Roaring 20's police car. A photograph of Supreme court Justices hung over your bed.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. It was clean and functional, but it took two minutes for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

The guest lounge on your floor was themed as a prison's library.

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. The restaurant name was "Clink." It looked like several cells in a jail. The menu was limited, but you found a menu item you liked.

DINING - BAR

After having your delicious dinner, you went to the hotel bar. Several posters with images of criminals were hanging on the wall. You took a seat in plain view of a bartender and a server. They were flirting with one another and were not busy with other customers. Still, you had to wait 5 minutes to be served. All drinks were named after notorious criminals. Your drinks were delivered with the pamphlet giving brief history about the criminal namesake of your drink.

EVENT (THEME)

Your hotel provided a standing exhibit about its history in a large room near its meeting rooms. On your way to the exhibit, you took some memorable pictures next to the posters of notorious criminals. At the exhibit, an interpreter who was dressed like a prison officer (Andy) described the room where more than 400 drunk and disorderly celebrities were kept while they sobered-up. A variety of items were on display, including guns, shackles, handcuffs, knives, antique locks and keys, and brass knuckles. Andy suggest that you might like to visit the hotel's recreated cell, where you could experience the reality of a cell. As you left the exhibit, Andy thanked you for visiting. You noticed a gift shop conveniently located in the next room.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. Your food was not as hot as you would have liked it to be when it arrived. One of the utensils had a fingerprint on its handle.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. Upon check out, the front desk agent, Rick, did not ask you about your satisfaction with your stay. He explained an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee).

Theme & Poor Service

ARRIVAL

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. This hotel is unique in that it was once the Metropolis jail. It now carries a “jail history” theme throughout. Although you arrived at the main entrance, no doorman or valet was present to help you. The valet station had been abandoned. After 30 minutes, a valet staff member, “Mike,” finally came to the entrance and started to slowly help you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore uniforms that looked like police officers from the “Roaring 20’s” (1920-1930). A sign explained that the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis was once the most significant jail in that city. It housed the city’s most notorious and famous criminals. As you entered the hotel, a staff member, Ann, unenthusiastically greeted you. “Welcome to the SS Luxury Hotel,” she mumbled. She pointed a finger toward the front desk to show you where to check-in. She then sauntered slowly back to her workstation.

LOBBY

As you entered, you looked at the unique design of the lobby. The hotel preserved the historical feel of the original jail.

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

A logo of the SS Luxury Hotel was visibly displayed on the wall behind the front desk. You noticed that the logo read, “Your history adventure awaits!” Two people were checking in. You waited patiently for 10 minutes. After the front desk agent finished serving the two people, someone cut in front of you in line. So, you continued to wait for another forty minutes. It was now almost 4:00 PM. When your turn arrived, you approached the counter, but the front desk agent completed a brief, unrelated task before greeting you. You noticed that the front desk agent had no name tag, but was dressed in a classic police uniform. The front desk agent said, “Good afternoon! I am Courtney, how may I help you?” After she found your reservation she said, “I am sorry that your room is not ready. We will give you a call when your room is ready.” She did not suggest a comfortable place for you to wait. After one and a half hours, you had not received a call, so you went to the front desk again. Courtney gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with historical photographs and brief history of the hotel.

HALLWAY

After a search, you finally found the elevator to take you to your room. Only two elevators were available for hotel guests, but one of them did not work. “Wanted-Dead or Alive” posters were displayed, one on each of the three walls of the elevator. Each poster portrayed a notorious criminal of the past. Corridors were dusty and you found that the hallway was noisy. Trash and room service dishes were left out. You noticed that the hallway preserved its architectural history: it looked like a jail! Signs with black and white stripes like an inmate’s clothing directed you to your room.

GUESTROOM

You arrived at your room, but your keys did not work. You had to go down to the front desk. You received new keys and came back to your room. The first thing you noticed was that ‘Solitary’ was printed on your privacy door hanger, instead of ‘Do not disturb.’ Then, you noticed that the furniture had a layer of dust. The carpet was dirty and the closet door was severely scratched. The overhead entry light didn’t work. It was cold in your room, even

though the thermometer was set to 75 degrees. The air in the room was stale; it had a musty odor.

You noticed a few crumbs were scattered in places on the floor. The ice bucket was filled with water from a previous guest. A big toenail clipping and someone's makeup pencil rested on the floor. Scuff marks were on all pieces of furniture. Small folds of wallpaper were starting to peel off one of the walls. Walls were decorative and communicated the history theme. A thin area rug in the room had no pad. Something outside the window rattled in the wind, persistently.

There were no drawers for you to store your clothes and the closet was extremely small. Your luggage would not fit into the closet, so you had to leave it in a corner of your room.

BEDDING

A corner of the bedsheet was torn and the sheet had a small hole in it. The mattress felt like a soft futon and sheets weren't well fitted or premium quality. Your bed and beddings were not comfortable at all. The comforter on your bed included the image of a Roaring 20's police car. A photograph of Supreme court Justices hung over your bed. A small pad of butter stuck to the wall next to the bed. Your room was very noisy. You could hear people on the same floor open and close their doors. You could also hear people next door showering and construction on the street.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. Smudges of something greasy were on the bathroom door. The bathroom walls had permanent stains and the corners were quite dirty. The bathroom garbage hadn't been fully emptied. The shower and tub had mildew between tiles. When you flushed the toilet, the aroma of sewer gas came out of the shower and bathtub drain. The bathroom was small and fixtures in the bathroom needed repair from sink faucets to the shower control. You found that the water pressure was not strong enough to take a pleasant shower. It took two minutes for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

The guest lounge on your floor was themed as a prison's library.

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. The restaurant name was "Clink." It looked like several cells in a jail. No one was at the door to greet you and escort you to a seat. After 10 minutes, a desk staff member, Tina, arrived and took you to a table. She handed you a limited menu. You noticed that the food was very expensive. However, you decided to order a salad and main dish. A waiter, Aiden, seemed to have a bad attitude toward you and forgot what you ordered. Your food was poorly seasoned and below par overall.

DINING - BAR

After having your dinner, you went to the hotel bar. Several posters with images of criminals were hanging on the wall. You took a seat in plain view of a bartender and a server, but waited 15 minutes to be acknowledged. Although your table was clean, the table next to yours was not. When one of staff members, Tom, tried to clean the table next to you, he spilled water on the floor. One table remained uncleaned for the entire time you visited the bar. All drinks were named after notorious criminals. Your drinks were delivered with the pamphlet giving a brief history about the criminal namesake of your drink.

EVENT (THEME)

Your hotel provided a standing exhibit about its history in a large room near its meeting rooms. On your way to the exhibit, you took some memorable pictures next to the posters of notorious criminals. At the exhibit, an interpreter who was dressed like a prison officer (Andy) described the room where more than 400 drunk and disorderly celebrities were kept while they sobered-up. A variety of items were on display, including guns, shackles, handcuffs, knives, antique locks and keys, and brass knuckles. Andy suggested that you might like to visit the hotel's recreated cell, where you could experience the reality of a cell. As you left the exhibit, Andy thanked you for visiting. You noticed a gift shop conveniently located in the next room.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. The menu was very limited. After forty minutes, it still had not arrived. You called to inquire. "Oh, yes," they responded, "we see your order and it will be up shortly." After a long wait, you decided to take a shower. Just as the water started to warm up, you heard a knock at the door. Your breakfast had finally arrived. You had to get out of the shower to answer the door. You didn't receive any apology or explanation. Your food was cold, and all utensils had fingerprints on their handles. You found that your breakfast room service price was \$46 without tip (one omelet & yogurt parfait). After having your breakfast, you called to request that the dishes be removed, but no one ever came to remove them. Your tray sat in the hall for hours.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. At 9:00 AM, housekeeping entered your room, calling out "Housekeeping!" But check-out time was noon. You went to the front desk to check out. There was only one front desk agent, although there were a lot of people waiting for their turn. Upon check out, a front desk agent, Rick, did not ask you about your stay and didn't explain an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee). The printer was broken, so you could not get a printed receipt. You had to wait for 25 minutes for your valet to deliver your car, making you late for the airport.

Not Themed & Excellent Service**ARRIVAL**

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel - Metropolis at check-in time. When you arrived at the main entrance, a valet staff member, "Mike," enthusiastically greeted you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore neat and clean uniforms. Mike unloaded your luggage skillfully and one of his co-workers, Ann, engaged you in friendly conversation as she escorted you to the front desk.

LOBBY

As you entered, you looked at the unique design of the lobby. While heading to the front desk, Ann briefly explained the information about the hotel services and properties.

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

Two people were checking in. Although you were willing to wait your turn, a front desk agent who had been diligently working on another task immediately turned her attention to you. Her nametag read, "Courtney." Courtney was also dressed in neat and clean uniform.

"Good afternoon!" she said, "I am Courtney, how may I help you?" After this warm greeting, she offered you a glass of champagne. She quickly found your reservation and gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with brief information of the hotel. You found the service to be very reliable, prompt, and friendly!

HALLWAY

Using the clear instructions Courtney provided, you easily found the elevator to take you to your room. Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that they can get in the elevator in less than one minute. The hallway looked very clean and very quiet. Signs clearly directed you to your room.

GUESTROOM

You entered your room. You noticed the pleasing aroma of a blend of white tea with wood cedar and vanilla. All furniture and items were well-organized and in good order. The carpet was very clean and plush. Your room temperature was perfect; neither too cold nor too hot. Your room was large and well-proportioned, with a comfortable seating area. The furniture was top-quality and seating was very comfortable, including arrangements for television viewing. Fully enclosed clothes-hanging space with more than ten wood removable matching hangers were provided. Storage space was more than enough for your two pieces of luggage.

BEDDING

The quality of bed linens was outstanding. Your bed was a top-quality foam mattress like those other luxury hotels use. Sheets were triple sheeting and well fitted. Your pillow collection included both down (feathers) and foam options. The wall and night tables next to the bed were very clean. Your room was very quiet. You could not hear anything from outside of your room.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. Your bathroom was elegant! It had a unique style, with luxurious fixtures and artistic elements. Of course, it was very clean. The bathroom was also spacious. It allowed you generous ease of movement, comfort, and relaxation. Large framed mirrors and top-quality marble shower walls were highlights. You enjoyed the aroma of lemon and lime blossom notes. Your water pressure was appropriate to take a pleasant shower. It took only a couple of seconds for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

N/A

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. When you arrived, a desk staff member, Tina, greeted you with a smile. She informed you that you would be served in about five minutes. She escorted you to a comfortable waiting area and handed you a drink and a menu. Your menu included an impressive variety of food and beverages. You noticed that the food prices were very reasonable. After five minutes, a server, Aiden, escorted you to your seat. Your food arrived. It was delicious! It was well seasoned and it exceeded your expectations.

DINING - BAR

After enjoying your dinner, you went to the hotel bar. A server, Tom, immediately greeted you and escorted you to your seat. You noticed that the drink prices were very reasonable.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. The menu options were extensive. Your breakfast was delivered within five minutes of time promised, and your host, Scott, surprised you with a morning newspaper. Your food was served at the proper temperature and Scott provided instructions for the tray removal. All dishware and linens were of an upscale quality and looked like a brand-new. Throughout the delivery process, Scott used your name. He showed a sincere desire to satisfy all of your requests. After having your breakfast, you called to request that the dishes be removed. Within a few minutes, a staff member, Debbie, removed your dishes, with a warm and sincere smile.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. Express check-out services were available 24 hours/seven days a week. You went to the front desk to check out. Several front desk agents were serving guests. You waited less than three minutes. Upon check out, the front desk agent, Rick, asked you about your stay and explained an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee). He confirmed your payment method and provided a copy of the bill for you to review. Rick expressed a warm and sincere thank-you for staying at the hotel and he sincerely invited you to return. With a warm escort by Ann, you arrived at the exit. The valet, Mike, had your car waiting. He checked all of your belongings and placed them in your car. You headed for the airport.

Not Themed & Moderate Service

ARRIVAL

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. You noticed that the hotel has distinct features; it looks different from other hotels. Although you arrived at the main entrance, no doorman or valet was immediately present to help you. The valet station had been abandoned. After about 30 seconds, a valet staff member, “Mike,” came to the entrance, apologized, and started to help you. As you entered the hotel, a staff member, Ann, enthusiastically greeted you. “Welcome to the SS Luxury Hotel!” she exclaimed Ann led you to a place where you could easily see where to check-in. She wished you a memorable visit and returned to her workstation.

LOBBY

While heading to the front desk, you noticed that the lobby had distinct features.

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

Two people were checking in. You waited patiently for 2 minutes. A front desk agent acknowledged you, “Good afternoon!” she said, “I am Courtney, how may I help you?” You noticed that Courtney had no name tag, nor did she dress in a uniform. After she found your reservation, she said, “I am very sorry that your room is not ready. We will finish our preparations and give you a call immediately when your room is ready.” She suggested a comfortable place for you to wait, and she provided you with a free drink from the bar for your trouble. After five minutes, she walked to where you were sitting, apologized again, and gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with brief history of the hotel.

HALLWAY

You boarded the elevator to your room. The hallway was neat and clean, but you did notice one room in front of which service dishes had been left in the hallway. The hallway looked very quiet.

GUESTROOM

You arrived at your room, but your keys did not work. You had to go down to the front desk. You received new keys and came back to your room. You noticed a pleasing scent in the air you as you entered. You found your room to be neat and clean. Your room was very comfortable. It included a nice couch, matching chairs, and a comfortable ottoman. Your luggage would not fit into the small closet, so you had to leave it in a corner of your room.

BEDDING

A corner of the bedsheet had a small hole in it. Otherwise, you found your bed to be very comfortable.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. It was clean and functional, but it took two minutes for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

N/A

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. The menu was limited, but you found a menu item you liked.

DINING - BAR

After having your delicious dinner, you went to the hotel bar. You took a seat in plain view of a bartender and a server. They were flirting with one another and were not busy with other customers. Still, you had to wait 5 minutes to be served.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. Your food was not as hot as you would have liked it to be when it arrived. One of the utensils had a fingerprint on its handle.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. Upon check out, the front desk agent, Rick, did not ask you about your satisfaction with your stay. He explained an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee).

Not Themed & Poor Service**ARRIVAL**

You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. Although you arrived at the main entrance, no doorman or valet was present to help you. The valet station had been abandoned. After 30 minutes, a valet staff member, “Mike,” finally came to the entrance and

started to slowly help you. As you entered the hotel, a staff member, Ann, unenthusiastically greeted you. "Welcome to the SS Luxury Hotel," she mumbled. She pointed a finger toward the front desk to show you where to check-in. She then sauntered slowly back to her workstation.

LOBBY

As you entered, you looked at the unique design of the lobby.

CHECK-IN (FRONT DESK)

Two people were checking in. You waited patiently for 10 minutes. After the front desk agent finished serving the two people, someone cut in front of you in line. So, you continued to wait for another forty minutes. It was now almost 4:00 PM. When your turn arrived, you approached the counter, but the front desk agent completed a brief, unrelated task before greeting you. You noticed that the front desk agent had no name tag, nor did she dress in a uniform. The front desk agent said, "Good afternoon! I am Courtney, how may I help you?" After she found your reservation and said, "I am sorry that your room is not ready. We will give you a call when your room is ready." She did not suggest a comfortable place for you to wait. After one and a half hours, you had not received a call, so you went to the front desk again. Courtney gave you your room key card inside a colorful booklet with brief history of the hotel.

HALLWAY

After a search, you finally found the elevator to take you to your room. Only two elevators were available for hotel guests, but one of them did not work. Corridors were dusty and you found that the hallway was noisy. Trash and room service dishes were left out.

GUESTROOM

You arrived at your room, but your keys did not work. You had to go down to the front desk. You received new keys and came back to your room. When you entered your room, you noticed that the furniture had a layer of dust. The carpet was dirty and the closet door was severely scratched. The overhead entry light didn't work. It was cold in your room, even though the thermometer was set to 75 degrees. The air in the room was stale; it had a musty odor.

You noticed a few crumbs were scattered in places on the floor. The ice bucket was filled with water from a previous guest. A big toenail clipping and someone's makeup pencil rested on the floor. Scuff marks were on all pieces of furniture. Small folds of wallpaper were starting to peel off one of the walls. A thin area rug in the room had no pad. Something outside the window rattled in the wind, persistently. There were no drawers for you in which to store your clothes and the closet was extremely small. Your luggage would not fit into the closet, so you had to leave it in a corner of your room.

BEDDING

A corner of the bedsheet was torn and the sheet had a small hole in it. The mattress felt like a soft futon and sheets weren't well fitted or premium quality. Your bed and beddings were not comfortable at all. A small pad of butter stuck to the wall next to the bed. Your room was very noisy. You could hear people on the same floor open and close their doors. You could also hear people next door showering and construction on the street.

BATHROOM

You examined the bathroom. Smudges of something greasy were on the bathroom door. The bathroom walls had permanent stains and the corners were quite dirty. The bathroom garbage hadn't been fully emptied. The shower and tub had mildew between tiles. When you flushed the toilet, the aroma of sewer gas came out of the shower and bathtub drain. The bathroom was small and fixtures in the bathroom needed repair from sink faucets to the shower control. You found that the water pressure was not strong enough to take a pleasant shower. It took two minutes for the water to get hot.

OTHERS

N/A

DINING - RESTAURANT

For your dinner, you went to the hotel restaurant. No one was at the door to greet you and escort you to a seat. After 10 minutes, a desk staff member, Tina, arrived and took you to a table. She handed you a limited menu. You noticed that the food was very expensive. However, you decided to order a salad and main dish. A waiter, Aiden, seemed to have a bad attitude toward you and forgot what you ordered. Your food was poorly seasoned and below par overall.

DINING - BAR

After having your dinner, you went to the hotel bar. You took a seat in plain view of a bartender and server, but waited 15 minutes to be acknowledged. Although your table was clean, the table next to yours was not. When one of the staff members, Tom, tried to clean the table next to you, he spilled water on the floor. One table remained uncleaned for the entire time you visited the bar.

ROOM SERVICE - BREAKFAST

You ordered room service for breakfast. The menu was very limited. After forty minutes, it still had not arrived. You called to inquire. "Oh, yes," they responded, "we see your order and it will be up shortly." After a long wait, you decided to take a shower. Just as the water started to warm up, you heard a knock at the door. Your breakfast had finally arrived. You had to get out of the shower to answer the door. You didn't receive any apology or explanation. Your food was cold, and all utensils had fingerprints on their handles. You found that your breakfast room service price was \$46 without tip (one omelet & yogurt parfait). After having your breakfast, you called to request that the dishes be removed, but no one ever came. Your tray sat in the hall for hours.

CHECK-OUT (FRONT DESK & DEPARTURE)

Check-out day arrived. At 9:00 AM, housekeeping entered your room, calling out "Housekeeping!" But check-out time was noon. You went to the front desk to check out. There was only one front desk agent, although there were a lot of people waiting for their turn. Upon check out, a front desk agent, Rick, did not ask you about your stay and didn't explain an additional charge you did not expect (a destination fee). The printer was broken, so you could not get a printed receipt. You had to wait for 25 minutes for your valet to deliver your car, making you late for the airport.

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1 Introduction

Howdy!

Thank you very much for considering helping me with my doctoral dissertation at *Texas A&M* by contributing to this study! I am studying the effects of different features of a luxury hotel visit on the quality of guests' experiences. Results will help hotel managers provide better guest experiences. I appreciate your contribution to me and to the study very much.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and your responses will be kept completely confidential. This survey is very easy to complete. It will take approximately **8-12 minutes** of your time. You will watch a short video telling the story of an imaginary luxury hotel visit, and then answer some questions about that visit. You can stop the survey at any time and may choose to not answer any question you find to be confusing or troubling in any way.

Q2 Have you visited, seen, or heard about the "Liberty Hotel" in Boston?

- ☐ No, I have never visited, seen, or heard about that hotel
- ☐ Yes, I have visited that hotel
- ☐ Yes, I have seen that hotel, but I have never visited it
- ☐ Yes, I have heard about that hotel, but I have never visited or seen it

Q3 Have you stayed at a luxury hotel for at least one night during the past year?

A luxury hotel provides luxurious accommodations for guests. Most 4- and 5-star hotels describe themselves as luxury hotels.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe, I am not sure

Q4 Next, we will play a short video for you. The video tells a story about an ***imaginary visit to a luxury hotel***. Please follow the story carefully. After the video ends, please answer the questions about your experience.

Let's start!

Q5 Please watch this video and click next button. The next button will be displayed after you complete watching this video.

Q6 The average price a guest pays for a single night stay in a five-star hotel in a major city in the U.S. is **\$400**. What is a ***fair price for a single night experience*** at this hotel, given your experience would be like what you saw in the video?

\$0 \$100 \$200 \$300 **\$400** \$500 \$600 \$700 \$800 \$900 \$1000

US Dollars ()	
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Q7 If a friend, relative, or colleague asked, how likely is it that you would **recommend** this hotel, given your experience was like what you saw in the video?

I would not recommend, 0% I would recommend, 100%

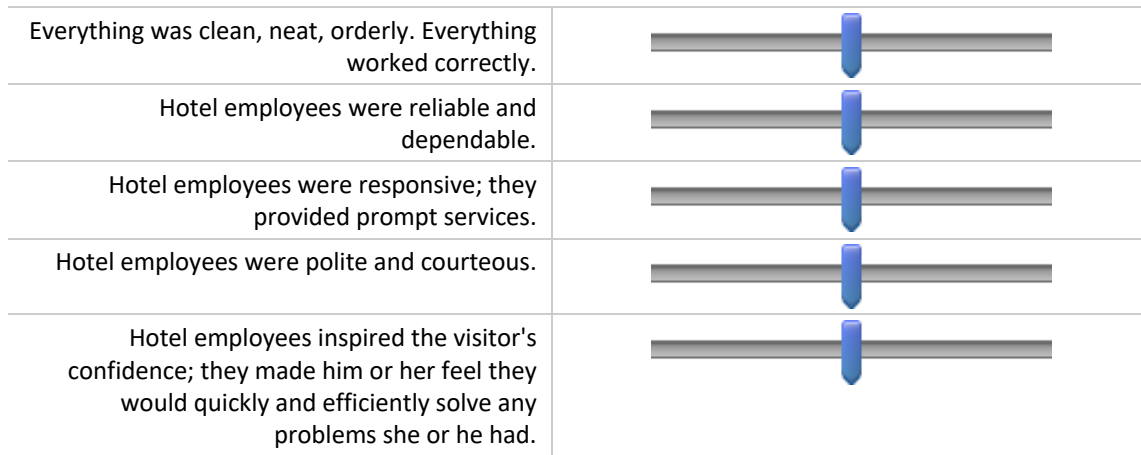
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Q8 What is **your evaluation** of each of the following features of the imaginary hotel you visited through your scenario experience?

Not at all, 0% Extremely so, 100%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Q9 We have several versions of the video you watched. In some versions, a hotel employee describes the **history of the hotel** to the guest. Do you recall whether an employee described the history of the hotel **in the video you viewed**?

- ☐ Yes, an employee described the history of the hotel
- ☐ No, an employee did not describe the history of the hotel
- ☐ I do not recall whether or not an employee described the history of the hotel





Q10 Please use the slider scale to respond to each of the following questions. All questions refer to your imaginary hotel visit depicted in the scenario.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100







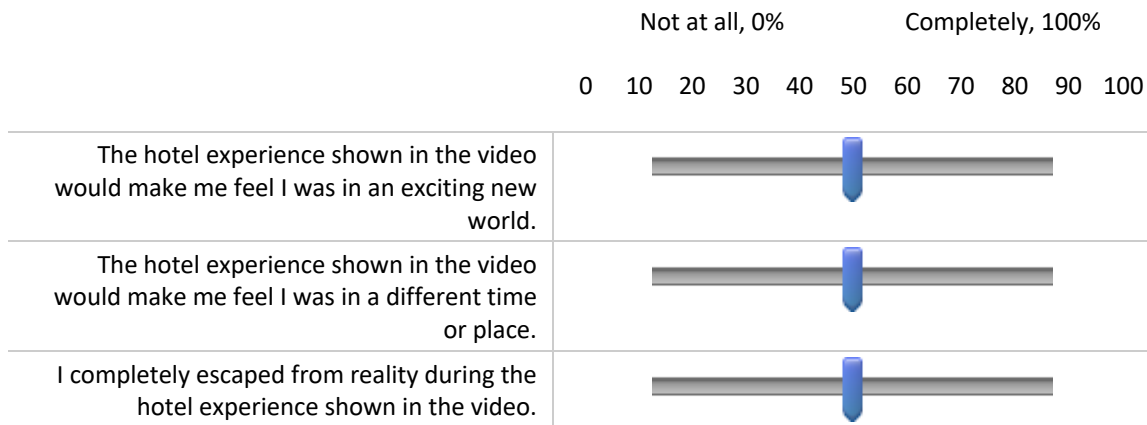
I would be glad that I chose this hotel.	
I would have made a good choice if I decided to stay at this hotel.	
I would wish I had spent my time at a different hotel.	
Staying at this hotel would be worth the time I put into it.	

Q11 Please use the slider scale to respond to each of the following questions. All questions refer to your imaginary hotel visit depicted in the scenario.

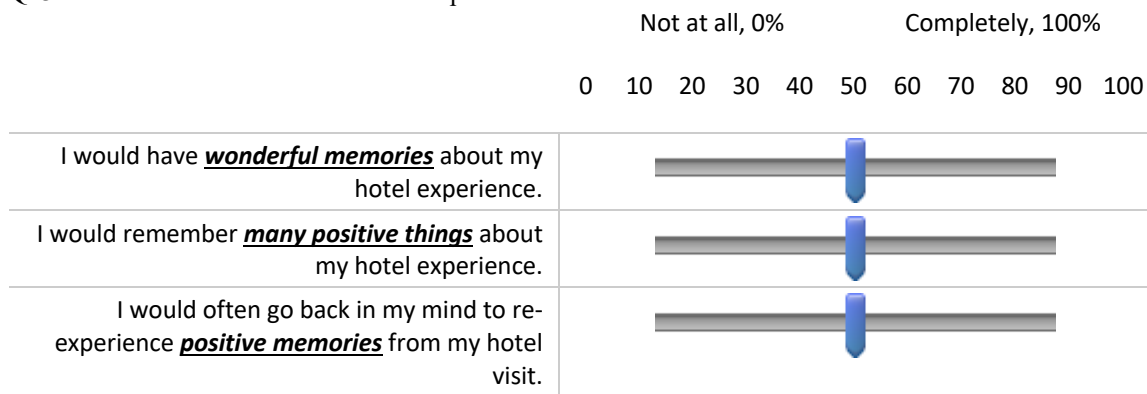
	Not at all, 0%	Completely, 100%									
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
This hotel experience would make me feel good.											
This hotel experience would give me pleasure.											
This hotel experience would give me a sense of joy.											
This hotel experience would make me feel delighted.											
This hotel experience would make me feel happy.											

Q12 To what extent to do you agree with the following statements concerning your imaginary **hotel service experience**?

	Not at all, 0%	Completely, 100%									
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
I would feel special.											
I would feel welcome.											
I would feel like a unique guest.											
I would feel acknowledged.											



Q13 How memorable would this hotel experience be?



Q14 Have you visited, seen, or heard about "Jail-Themed Hotels?"

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q15 What is your gender?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Q16 What is your age, in years?

Q17 Which of the following would you identify as your race?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ Native American / Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black / African American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander

- ☐ White / Caucasian
- ☐ Other

Q18 Which of the following best represents your annual household income (in U.S. dollars)?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ Less than \$15,000
- ☐ \$15,000 - less than \$30,000
- ☐ \$30,000 - less than \$45,000
- ☐ \$45,000 - less than \$60,000
- ☐ \$60,000 - less than \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,000 - less than \$90,000
- ☐ \$90,000 - less than \$105,000
- ☐ \$105,000 - less than \$120,000
- ☐ \$120,000 - less than \$135,000
- ☐ \$135,000 - less than \$150,000
- ☐ More than \$150,000

Q19 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ High school diploma
- ☐ Some college, but no degree
- ☐ College degree
- ☐ One or more graduate school degree(s)

Q20 Which of the following best describes your employment situation?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ Employed full time
- ☐ Employed part time
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other

Q21 What is your current marital status?

- ☐ I prefer to not respond
- ☐ Not married
- ☐ Married

APPENDIX C: EMAIL CONTENT

[Subject Line] Please help an Aggie complete his dissertation and add to knowledge about hotel management!

“If we have an opportunity to make a difference in the life of even one student, then it is worth it to know we have helped another Aggie.”

Research Title: Strategies for improving the quality of guests' lodging experience at luxury hotels – Effects of theme and service performance
Investigators: Dr. Gary Ellis (Principal Investigator) and Mr. Seobgyu Song (Protocol Director and PhD Candidate)

Howdy!

My name is Seobgyu Song. I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M. I would like to ask you to help me complete my research project and graduate my doctoral degree. You will also be adding to understanding about hotels. You can participate by clicking the link below. If you click the link, your computer will be directed to a website. The website will play a video. The video is about 5-9 minutes long. It is an imaginary visit to a hotel. After the video ends, the website will also ask you a few questions about your reaction to the video.

We are not trying to sell you anything. We will not ask your name, or any other information that would allow us to identify you.

You will not receive any direct benefit by helping me with this study. Knowledge from the research will, though, help us better understand guests' hotel experiences. Hotel managers may make better decisions about pleasing their guests.

Participation is voluntary. All responses will be confidential. If you begin this study and decide you do not want to complete it, you can simply redirect your computer to a different task. No penalty or negative result will happen if you decide to not finish the study. Feel free to skip any question you do not want to answer. No penalty will result.

The study will approximately 8-12 minutes to complete. You can stop at any time. No sensitive questions that should cause discomfort are included on the questionnaire.

You may have questions about your rights. Maybe you will want to file a complaint or provide a comment about how the study is conducted. If so, contact the person in charge of this study: Seobgyu Song, PhD Candidate, Texas A&M University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, (979) 820-7028 or via e-mail: sgsong78@tamu.edu.

You can also contact Dr. Gary Ellis, Professor, Texas A&M University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, (979) 845-6018, gellis1@tamu.edu.

If you have other questions or concerns about this study, please contact the Human Research Protection Program at Texas A&M University (which is a group of people who review the research to protect your rights) by phone at 1-979-458-4067, toll free at 1-855-795-8636, or by email at irb@tamu.edu for:

- additional help with any questions about the research
- voicing concerns or complaints about the research
- obtaining answers to questions about your rights as a research participant
- concerns in the event the research staff could not be reached
- the desire to talk to someone other than the research staff

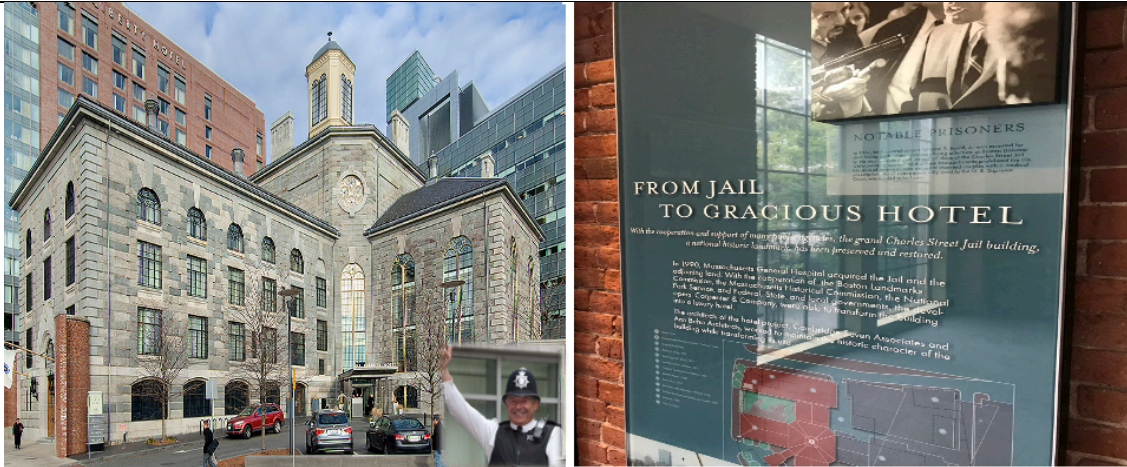
Survey Link: https://tamuag.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3ykaG45nOKPzW2F

IRB ID/Reference Number: IRB2019-1488M / 102465 (January 21, 2020)

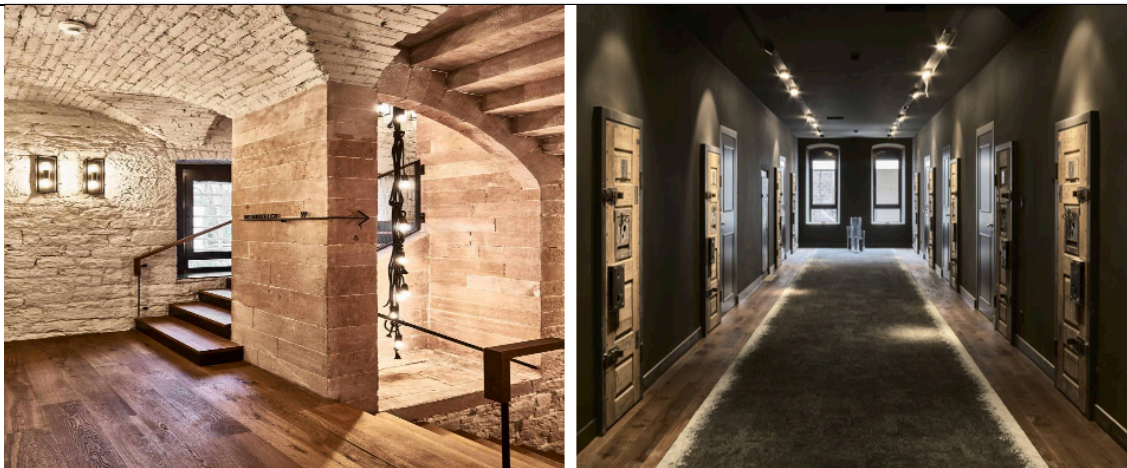
APPENDIX D: EXAMPLES OF THEME AND SERVICE QUALITY MANIPULATIONS

Examples of Theme Manipulation

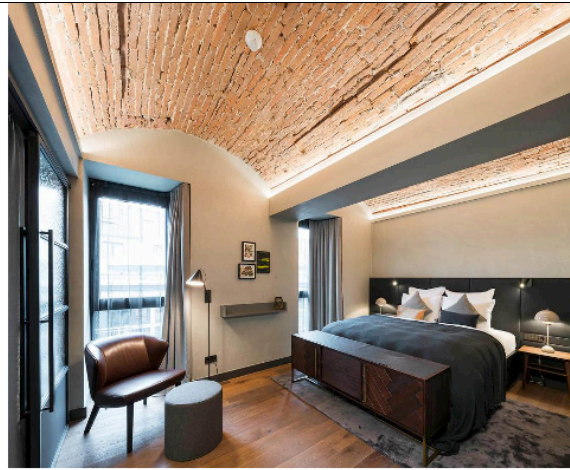
Themed



You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. This hotel is unique in that it was once the Metropolis jail. It now carries a “jail history” theme throughout. When you arrived at the main entrance, a valet staff member, “Mike,” enthusiastically greeted you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore uniforms that looked like police officers from the “Roaring 20’s” (1920-1930). A sign explained that the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis was once the most significant jail in that city. It housed the city’s most notorious and famous criminals. Mike skillfully and carefully unloaded your luggage. One of his co-workers, Ann, engaged you in friendly conversation as she escorted you to the front desk.



Using the clear instructions Courtney provided, you easily found the elevator to take you to your room. Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that they could get in the elevator in less than one minute. “Wanted-Dead or Alive” posters were displayed, one on each of the three walls of the elevator. Each poster portrayed a notorious criminal of the past. The hallway looked very clean and very quiet. It reminded you of an empty jail cell. You noticed that the hallway preserved its architectural history: it looked like a jail! Signs, with black and white stripes like an inmate’s clothing clearly directed you to your room.



You entered your room. The first thing you noticed was that 'Solitary' was printed on your privacy door hanger, instead of 'Do not disturb.' Then, you noticed the pleasing aroma of a blend of white tea with wood cedar and vanilla. All furniture and items were well-organized. The carpet was very clean and plush. Your room temperature was perfect; neither too cold nor too hot. Your room was large and well-proportioned, with a comfortable seating area. The furniture was top-quality and seating was very comfortable, including arrangements for television viewing. Walls were decorative and communicated the jail history theme. Fully enclosed clothes-hanging space with more than ten wood removable matching hangers were provided. Storage space was more than enough for your two pieces of luggage.

Not Themed



You arrived at the SS Luxury Hotel – Metropolis at check-in time. When you arrived at the main entrance, a valet staff member, "Mike," enthusiastically greeted you. You noticed that Mike and all of his fellow employees wore neat and clean uniforms. Mike skillfully and carefully unloaded your luggage. One of his co-workers, Ann, engaged you in friendly conversation as she escorted you to the front desk.



Using the clear instructions Courtney provided, you easily found the elevator to take you to your room. Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that they can get in the elevator in less than one minute. The hallway looked very clean and very quiet. Signs clearly directed you to your room.



You entered your room. You noticed the pleasing aroma of a blend of white tea with wood cedar and vanilla. All furniture and items were well-organized and in good order. The carpet was very clean and plush. Your room temperature was perfect; neither too cold nor too hot. Your room was large and well-proportioned, with a comfortable seating area. The furniture was top-quality and seating was very comfortable, including arrangements for television viewing. Fully enclosed clothes-hanging space with more than ten wood removable matching hangers were provided. Storage space was more than enough for your two pieces of luggage.

Examples of Service Quality Manipulation

Excellent Service Quality



Using the clear instructions Courtney provided, you easily found the elevator to take you to your room. Several elevators were available for hotel guests, so that they can get in the elevator in less than one minute. The hallway looked very clean and very quiet. Signs clearly directed you to your room.



The quality of bed linens was outstanding. Your bed was a top-quality foam mattress like those other luxury hotels use. Sheets were triple sheeting and well fitted. Your pillow collection included both down (feathers) and foam options. The wall and night tables next to the bed were very clean. Your room was very quiet. You could not hear anything from outside of your room.

Poor Service Quality



After a search, you finally found the elevator to take you to your room. Only two elevators were available for hotel guests, but one of them did not work. Corridors were dusty and you found that the hallway was noisy. Trash and room service dishes were left out.



A corner of the bedsheet was torn and the sheet had a small hole in it. The mattress felt like a soft futon and sheets weren't well fitted or premium quality. Your bed and beddings were not comfortable at all. A small pad of butter stuck to the wall next to the bed. Your room was very noisy. You could hear people on the same floor open and close their doors. You could also hear people next door showering and construction on the street.
